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DRAGON FORCE
METRO TALKS TO STARS OF NEW THRILLER {page 29}

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4 dead in murder-suicide

Highway killings occurred just north of Claresholm ▶ RCMP believe male shooter killed three and injured another before turning on himself ▶ No word yet on a possible motive

JEREMY NOLAIS
@METRONEWS.CA
METRO CANADA IN CALGARY

Four people, including two elite baseball players from Prince Edward Island, are dead and a small Alberta community is rattled following an apparent murder-suicide in the early-morning hours Thursday.

RCMP believe an armed male in one vehicle opened fire on another with four passengers shortly before 3:30 a.m. just north of Claresholm on Highway 2.

RCMP found two victims, a male and a female, along with the alleged shooter, dead on scene.

A third victim was airlifted to a Calgary hospital in critical condition but later died.

Another female transported by ambulance to hospital underwent surgery and is expected to recover.

According to the Guardian newspaper in Charlottetown, two of the victims are Mitch MacLean, 20 of Cornwall, P.E.I. and Tanner Craswell, also in his early 20s, of Charlottetown.

JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

▶ Investigators pore over a green Pontiac Sunfire that is believed to have been at the centre of a murder-suicide incident that left four people dead north of Claresholm Thursday.

The pair were reportedly attending the Prairie Baseball Academy in Lethbridge.

"This is very upsetting, not only to the community because this is a very horrific murder to have happen, but also for our members involved," said RCMP Sgt. Patrick Webb. "It's very distressful."

The victims may have been on their way to Calgary to catch a flight back home for Christmas.

Investigators spent much of the day at a heavily cordoned off crime scene that included a dark-coloured SUV and green Pontiac Sunfire. Blue tarps covered some areas inside one of the vehicles.

For more coverage, see page 4.

Surveillance footage

- RCMP had not released the identities of those involved in Thursday's killings near Claresholm at press time. Spokesperson Patrick Webb said officials were still working to notify next of kin.
- Webb confirmed investigators had obtained surveillance footage from some establishments within Claresholm, but could not confirm whether a dispute originated in the town.

Feds urging Canadians to leave Syria now

'We are declaring a voluntary evacuation,' said John Baird ▶ More than 5,000 Syrians have been killed in the uprising {page 18}

News

Calgary child gets a new lease on life

At four, she's Alberta's youngest heart-lung transplant patient {page 6}

Sports

Call for action on concussion 'epidemic'

Hockey agent says the league needs to do more to address the problem {page 52}

1 news

Facebook's much-hyped Timeline feature, which promises to turn profiles into scrapbooks, has gone live. Scan the code for the story.

To scan 2D barcodes in Metro, download the free ScanLife app at 2dscan.com.

On the web at metronews.ca

Baby Melinda, one of the smallest infants ever born, is alive and well — and defying the odds. Video at metronews.ca/video

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SHELLEY WILLIAMSON/METRO

▶ Lauderdale School runs one of 24 existing full-day kindergarten programs in the Edmonton Public Schools board.

Full-day kindergarten could lead to shuffling

Edmonton Public Schools official says 20 schools will need to add portables ▶ City's Catholic schools looking to be creative with space

SHELLEY WILLIAMSON
@METRONEWS.CA

Edmonton school board officials say if provincial plans to fund full-day kindergarten pass, it will leave city schools shuffling for space.

Since the half-day classes alternate between morning and afternoon schedules, more class space will have to be made in EPSB facilities, said Lorne Parker, managing director of planning, transportation and property management for Edmonton Public Schools.

"It's not a negative effect, but there will be costs associated with it," said Parker, explaining maintenance, staff, and space would factor in.

The pledge, estimated to cost $200 million to fund, was among several made by Premier Alison Redford aimed at improving education in Alberta.

Parker said the EPSB would not shift students in higher grades to accommodate extra kindergarten students.

"It would affect over 20 schools, where we would have to add space in the outlying areas," he explained, adding inner-city schools have the room now.

Meanwhile, Lori Nagy, Edmonton Catholic Schools spokesperson, said she doesn't see a problem in a shift to all full-day kindergarten classes.

The situation

- The Edmonton Public Schools board currently has 24 full-day kindergarten programs.
- The Edmonton Catholic Schools district has 34.

Teen shot in city's 45th homicide

Edmonton police are investigating the 45th homicide of the year after a young man died following a shooting in the city's west end.

Officers were called to a park near Picard Drive and Proctor Wynd in Lewis Estates at 11:18 p.m. Wednesday, where they found an injured teenager lying in the snow.

He died about two hours later in hospital.

Police had both the playground and field blocked off Thursday.

Tire tracks could be seen on the field, but police couldn't confirm anything about a getaway vehicle.

Residents in the area said police were knocking on doors around 2 a.m., but most admitted they didn't hear or see anything.

Two young men, who didn't want to be identified, were shocked as they arrived home around noon Thursday.

"It's weird coming home to something like this," said one.

HEATHER MCINTYRE

HEATHER MCINTYRE/METRO

▶ Police at the scene of the city's 45th homicide.

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STONY PLAIN

Charges laid in armed robbery

Stony Plain RCMP have charged a man following an armed robbery of drugs from a pharmacy.

Police said they were called to the Main Home Health Pharmacy Wednesday around 1:30 p.m. after a man wearing a balaclava demanded narcotics.

A suspect was later seen tossing his clothing, balaclava and gloves in the trash, police said.

Police followed the man to a home and arrested him.

Jason Ibsen, 32, is charged with robbery, disguise with intent and resisting arrest, and will appear in court Dec. 21. METRO

Employers told to ditch social-media background checks

KATIE TURNER
@METRONEWS.CA

Organizations should refrain from flipping through online photos and wall posts to learn more about potential employees, according to the provincial privacy commissioner's office.

Guidelines were released Thursday by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta, warning organizations they must not use social media to perform background checks.

Diane McLeod-McKay, director of the Personal Information Protection Act, said the issue with collecting information through sites such as Facebook is that it's not only one person's information that is being viewed, but others' info as well.

"Organizations really need to assess their privacy risks," she said.

McLeod-McKay said both the provincial office and its federal counterpart have been seeing an increase in the number of complaints.

She said there is one incident currently under investigation in Alberta.

"I'm guessing as more people become aware that there is a potential to be screened out of work opportunities because of the use of social media, that people are going to start complaining."

McLeod-McKay said employers should stick to traditional methods of gathering information such as reference checks and interviews.

For more news, visit metronews.ca/edmonton

JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

▶ A vehicle speeds past Claresholm's welcome sign. Members of the community diverted much of their attention Thursday to reports of a murder-suicide just one kilometre north of town.

Town left stunned by highway killings

- Claresholm residents hard-pressed to remember comparable tragedy
- RCMP caution against believing word-of-mouth, social media rumours

JEREMY NOLAIS
@METRONEWS.CA

Claresholm coffee shops and gas stations were abuzz with chatter Thursday while investigators worked just up the road from the southern Alberta town to determine the sequence of events that left four people dead.

K.C. Dixon, who has lived in the area for nearly her entire life, awoke to a flurry of Facebook chatter about the apparent murder-suicide.

"I don't know how to describe it," she said later in the day. "Everybody knows everyone here ... It's shocking for our community regardless of whether it's someone from here or not."

Roger Reid owns the local Tim Hortons about one kilometre from where the murders were committed.

"Everybody in here's been questioning it," he said. "It will be the topic of conversation here until we find out what happened.

"It's generally pretty quiet here. I think the last murder I can remember in town was about 20 years ago."

RCMP had been in contact with members of Claresholm's town council, assuring them that the deaths appear to be isolated and members of the community could rest easy.

"It's shocking, that's for sure," said Coun. Dave Hubka. "Really, things like this don't happen here."

More details

- Approximately 3,700 people call Claresholm home. Because Highway 2 runs directly through the middle of town, it serves as an important stop for people commuting to and from areas like Lethbridge and the northwestern United States.
- Rumours floated around town Thursday that a domestic altercation may have begun at the local 7-Eleven. Neither store officials nor RCMP would confirm those rumour.

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LUCY HAINES FOR METRO

▶ Cheyanne Mattern with her dad in Edmonton on Thursday

Little girl gets new lease of life

She is Alberta's youngest heart-lung transplant patient ◆ Donor organs were significantly larger

LUCY HAINES
EDMONTON@METRONEWS.CA

Four-year-old Cheyanne Mattern of Calgary is one lucky girl: perfectly healthy last July, then suddenly diagnosed with a rare disease and on a heart-lung machine for 40 days with no donor in site.

Fast forward to today, where the playful child is thinking about a new home and Christmas gifts, and with no idea that she's made history as Alberta's youngest heart-lung transplant patient, and only the third ever in the province.

The complicated nine-hour surgery, performed in October at Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton, was made more difficult because the donor organs were significantly larger than Cheyanne's.

14
There are currently 14 pediatric patients awaiting a heart transplant in Alberta — seven more are waiting for lungs.

Dr. John Mullen, surgical director of the lung transplant program, said the surgery involved keeping Cheyanne's chest open for five days to accommodate the larger organs.

"We're in uncharted territory, but we're buoyed by this success," he said. "We hope the heart-lung block will last 15 years, maybe longer, before she'd need another transplant."

Cheyanne's dad, Shaun Hill adds, "This came out of nowhere so quickly, and we want to thank the donor family for giving Cheyanne a second chance at life."

Pulmonary hypertension, Cheyanne's diagnosis, sees an elevated blood pressure in the lungs' arteries, putting pressure on the heart.

The family will now move to Edmonton for regular monitoring and to make sure there are no issues of rejection or infection.

Town declares war on ugly portable signs

SHELLEY WILLIAMSON
@METRONEWS.CA

St. Albert Mayor Nolan Crouse has seen the signs — and he thinks they're ugly.

After "modest negative input" from the public this month, city council in the municipality northwest of Edmonton voted to double annual permit fees for portable signs.

Crouse said it's an effort to clean up St. Albert's cluttered image.

"It's absolutely jam-packed with signs. We're asking people to clean up St. Albert Trail," said Crouse.

He suggested businesses take out newspaper ads or rent a billboard instead.

J. Wagner owns Grapevine Deli in downtown St. Albert, but has advertised on a sign on St. Albert Trail for years, a measure she said brings in considerable business.

Now she's been told she will lose her sign.

"It's by no means a strike against the paper, but a small ad is not going to bring in the same traffic," said Wagner.

Lorne Terrault's family has owned Paradise Pets on St. Albert Trail since 1977, and he is upset the fees — nonexistent 18 months ago — have doubled twice. "If our property taxes went up 50 per cent, don't you think people would complain about that?" he asked.

Fees doubled

$800 Though lower than the proposed 437 per cent increase, doubling fees for permits to advertise businesses on signs along St. Albert Trail brings the punitive cost to $800 a year.

60 City council earlier this month voted to shorten permits to 60 days from 90.

71 Mayor Nolan Crouse credited the council move to the fact he'd counted 71 signs in the city, and the city needed to cut the clutter, especially from its main drag.

6 J. Wagner, owner of downtown St. Albert's Grapevine Deli estimates about six new patrons a week find her from her Albert Trail signage.

Edmonton drops on danger index

Macleans magazine released its "Most Dangerous Cities" report Thursday, and Edmonton fell six places in its rankings this year, to 19th overall.

That's a 21.7 per cent decline since 2005, and 15 per cent better than 2009.

For the second year in a row, Prince George, B.C. took top spot, followed by Victoria, Saskatoon, Red Deer and Regina.

Calgary was the country's 50th most dangerous city, while Grande Prairie was rated seventh, according to the annual poll.

The report took Statistics Canada numbers from 2010 and rated rates per 100,000 for six crimes — homicide, sexual assault, aggravated assault, vehicle theft, robbery, and breaking and entering.

Edmonton did not make Top 5 of any category.

METRO

Chiquita to avoid using oilsands fuel

A major American food company is promising to avoid using fuel from Alberta's oilsands.

Chiquita Brands, which sells hundreds of millions of dollars of fruit, juice and snacks around the world, says it has joined 13 other companies and one city in trying to reduce its carbon footprint. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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CANDICE WARD
EDMONTON@METRONEWS.CA
METRO CANADA IN CALGARY

For those looking for volunteer work or needing a criminal record check for employment, the process is now a lot faster.

The RCMP has announced the recent installation of a number of the LiveScan Real Time Identification Devices (RTID) in strategically-located RCMP stations around the province.

"Given the important role volunteers play in our communities, all Albertans benefit when their security checks are processed as swiftly as possible," said Deputy Commissioner Dale McGowen, Commanding Officer "K" Division.

$25 is the fee if the Vulnerable Sector Check is used for employment purposes.

"Installation on these new LiveScan devices means that all Albertans, even those living in smaller communities, are now only a drive away from access to faster service."

This device allows for faster processing times for both Criminal and Vulnerable Sector Checks.

Applicants must still start their checks at their local RCMP but if fingerprints are required, they now have the option to travel to one of the LiveScan locations.

These new installations have also decreased the processing times for the paper-based fingerprint submissions. "Those being assisted now have the peace of mind knowing the person helping them has been verified by a Vulnerable Sector Check," said Jonathan Dennis, Alberta Solicitor General and Minister of Public Safety.

The RTID check

- There is a $25 fee if the Vulnerable Sector Check is used for employment purposes.
- There is no charge if for volunteer purposes.
- Fingerprints from these checks are not retained by the RCMP.
- They can not be used or searched for future purposes.

CANDICE WARD/FOR METRO

▶ Const. Meagan Fillion, with the Airdrie RCMP, fingerprints Solicitor General Jonathan Denis using one of the 20 new LiveScan Real Time Identification Devices on Thursday.

Worry persists as rent subsidies extended

HEATHER MCINTYRE
@METRONEWS.CA

Residents of Trinity Manor are relieved rent subsidies slated to end Dec. 31 have been extended, but are concerned about next steps.

The provincial funding began in 2007 to increase affordable housing.

"In terms of Edmonton, lots of municipalities chose to use a portion to create an interim rent subsidy," said municipal affairs spokesperson Magharita Reghelini-Griffiths.

The Capital Region Housing Corporation spread the program over five years, extending it one year to this December.

And, the approximate 700 Edmontonians affected recently received notice the money will continue to flow until next June.

"That will give more time to prepare the people," said Delmy Garcia-Hoyt, co-ordinator at Trinity Manor at 107 Avenue and 101 Street, home to new Canadians here less than three years.

But she's worried some won't find a replacement for the $360-monthly subsidy. "They're given an option of applying for other subsidies but that is like winning a lottery," she said.

The NDP's Rachel Notley said the province should continue the program, as Edmonton's wait list for subsidies sits at 3,000.

HEATHER MCINTYRE/METRO

▶ Residents in 20 units of Trinity Manor, at 107 Avenue and 101 Street, are some of the approximate 700 Edmontonians affected by the winding down of a rent subsidy program.

Program details

- The province provided $398 million to 39 eligible municipalities over three years starting in 2007.
- Edmonton received $109.6 million and the CHRC slated $7.8 million for rent supplement through a number of organizations.
- There have been more than 4,000 low-income housing units built since rents began to soar.

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LUCY HAINES/FOR METRO

▶ Ian O'Donnell, organizer of the Downtown X-Posed Symposium.

Downtown Edmonton: Love it or lose it

- Symposium showcases past, present, future of downtown Edmonton
- City tells symposium its vision for downtown is bold and doable

LUCY HAINES
EDMONTON@METRONEWS.CA

"A vibrant downtown is a vibrant city, and that will mean success for Edmonton," Mayor Stephen Mandel said at Downtown X-posed, a first-time symposium held Thursday, drawing more than 400 from the public and private sectors.

Mandel pointed to a new arena and Royal Alberta Museum as catalysts for downtown growth, but also said City Centre Airport lands and Rossdale development like the 104 Street funicular are part of the incoming vibrant change.

"I'm excited to see what our city will look like in the next five to 10 years," he said.

"Small projects matter, too. Everyone's responsible for a successful downtown. So goes your downtown, so goes your city."
IAN O'DONNELL, DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY LEAGUE

Ian O'Donnell, of the Downtown Edmonton Community League, said a proposed park in the warehouse district at 105 Street and 102 Avenue will be an escape from the concrete jungle and will lure citizens downtown.

Why does a downtown matter?

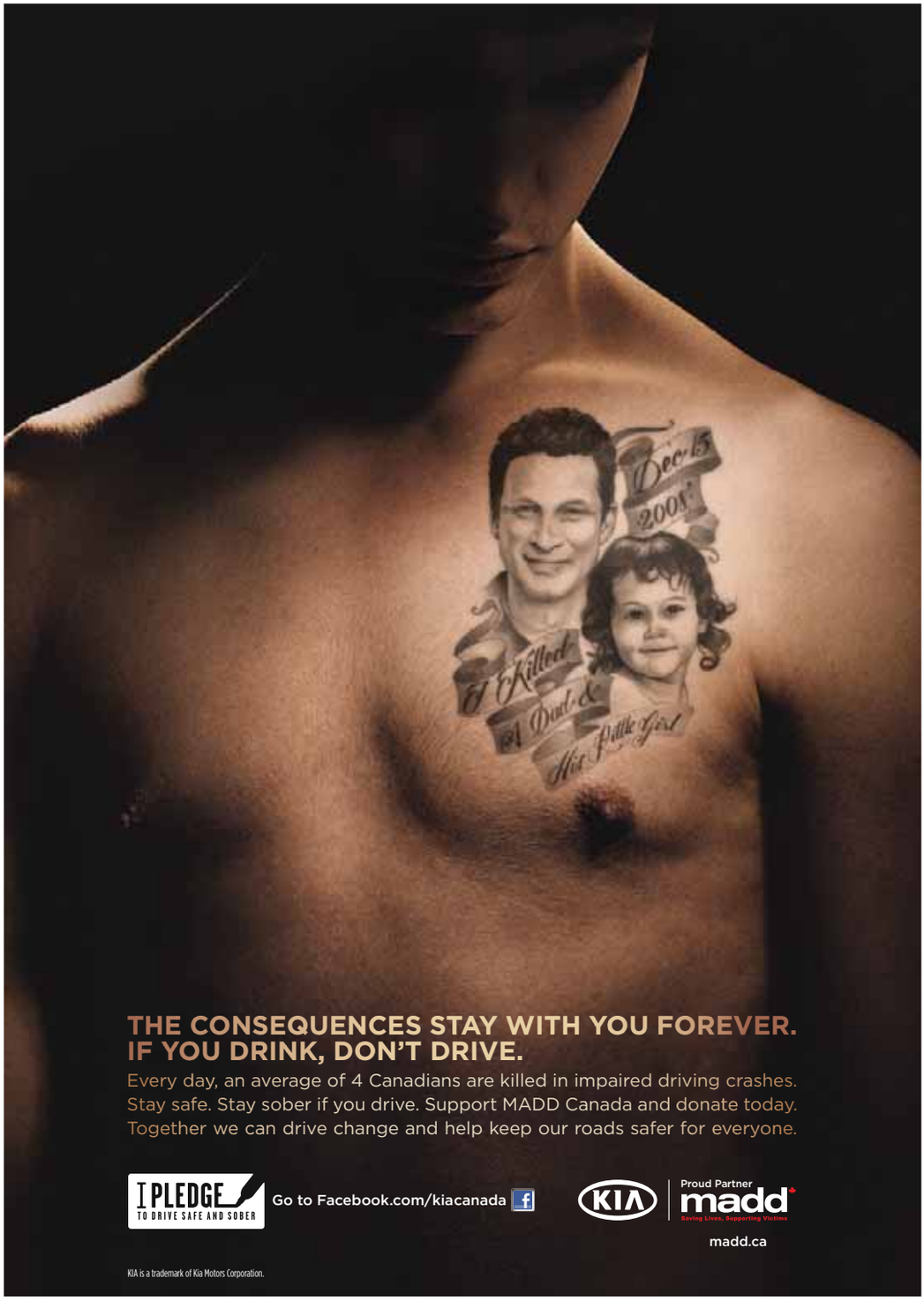
Toronto architect Ken Greenberg told a symposium on Edmonton's downtown Thursday that successful, thriving cities are ones that "gracefully embrace change" and make transitions needed to grow.

The symposium's keynote speaker pointed to the river valley, vibrant areas like 104 Street and Whyte Ave., the city airport project and Rossdale development as exciting opportunities.

The essence of city building is to combine and integrate elements where people can work, live, play and shop with great public transit, said Greenberg.

"There's great value, especially with a younger cohort, on walkable urban places and shared public spaces," he said. "These become magnets and bring economic prosperity to a city."

LUCY HAINES



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The doctor is in … such a big crowd

A record 70,000 MDs are working

The number of practising doctors in Canada is at an all-time high.

Nearly 70,000 physicians were working last year, a new report shows.

The report — released Thursday by the Canadian Institute for Health Information — suggests the doctor shortage of a few years ago is being resolved.

We may even be heading for a glut if the supply of doctors isn't better managed, the report suggests.

"We have the short-term glasses on right now. We need to maybe put the long-term glasses on," said Arthur Sweetman, a health economist and a member of CHEPA — the Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis — at McMaster University in Hamilton.

35%
There were 203 physicians for every 100,000 Canadians in 2010, up 35 per cent from the rate in 1980.

Another report by the health statistics agency said the average family doctor grossed $239,000 in 2010. The average specialist's gross income was $341,000.

But these gross incomes cover not just the doctor's salary, but the cost of running his or her office.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Homecoming. Afghan stint ends

▶ Capt. Steph Barteaux is hugged by her dad Bruce and mom Bonnie after arriving in Ottawa on Thursday.

SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Soldier returns to her family's loving arms

The sign says it all: Welcome home – and thanks for a job well done. Brig.-Gen. Charles Lamaree and his staff arrived at the Canadian Reception Centre in Ottawa on Thursday, ending their stint in Afghanistan. They were the last Canadian soldiers to leave Kandahar, signifying the close of Operation ATHENA, Canada's longest combat mission in Afghanistan. Now Canada is concentrating on a training mission in Kabul.

MacKay lived like a king in Europe, group says

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation is accusing Defence Minister Peter MacKay of living like a king while he attended conferences in Europe.

The group said Thursday it used access-to-information requests to uncover hotel bills that show MacKay spent $1,452 a night for a two-night stay at a hotel in Munich and $770 a night for three nights in Istanbul.

Gregory Thomas, national director of the group, said MacKay's staff had rooms in the same Munich hotel for $276 a night.

But the federation's complaints may be misdirected. MacKay was attending an annual security conference, held at Munich's Hotel Bayerischer Hof in February 2010.

ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILES

▶ A new fuss for Peter MacKay: He's accused of high spending while in Europe.

Senior federal officials said MacKay stayed at the hotel at the request of the German government, along with all other heads of delegation. "The organizers wanted and insisted upon that," said a Foreign Affairs source.

Thomas said his group filed an access request after it was revealed MacKay had an air force helicopter pick him up from a fishing lodge in Newfoundland.

"Going on the basis there's never only one cockroach, we just thought we'd, you know, look at some … of the minister's other travel expenses."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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U.S. marks end of mission in Iraq

Troops end presence with small service Iraqis' future uncertain

There was no Mission Accomplished banner. No victory parade down the centre of this capital scarred and rearranged by nearly nine years of war. No crowds of cheering Iraqis grateful for liberation from Saddam Hussein.

Instead, the U.S. military officially declared an end to its mission in Iraq on Thursday with a businesslike closing ceremony behind blast walls in a fortified compound at Baghdad airport. The flag used by U.S. forces in Iraq was lowered and boxed up in a 45-minute ceremony. No senior Iraqi political figures attended.

With that, and brief words from top American officials who flew in under tight security still necessary because of the ongoing violence in Iraq, the U.S. ended a war that left 4,500 Americans and more than 100,000 Iraqis dead.

The conflict also left another 32,000 Americans and far more Iraqis wounded, drained more than $800 billion from America's treasury and soured a majority of Americans on a war many initially supported as a just extension of the fight against terrorism after the 9-11 attacks.

As the last troops withdraw from Iraq, they leave behind a nation free of Saddam's tyranny but fractured by violence and fearful of the future. Bombings and gun battles are still common. And experts worry about the Iraqi security forces' ability to defend against foreign threats. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ U.S. Command Sgt. Major Joseph R. Allen, left, and U.S. army Gen. Lloyd Austin, commander of U.S. Forces Iraq, wrap up a flag used by the U.S. forces in Iraq during a ceremony in Baghdad on Thursday.

Reaction

- **Some Iraqis celebrated** the U.S. exit and others said that while grateful for ousting Saddam, the war went on too long.
- **"With this withdrawal,** the Americans are leaving behind a destroyed country," said Mariam Khazim, a Shiite whose father was killed by a mortar shell.
- **"The Americans did not** leave modern schools or big factories behind them. Instead, they left thousands of widows and orphans. The Americans did not leave a free people and country behind them; in fact, they left a ruined country and a divided nation."
- **"The American ceremony** represents the failure of the U.S. occupation of Iraq due to the great resistance of the Iraqi people," said lawmaker Amir al-Kinani.

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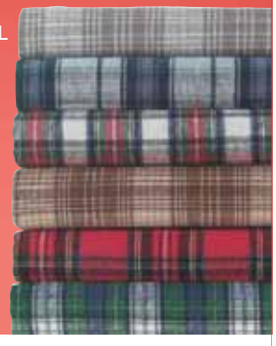

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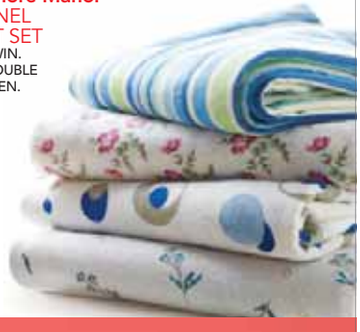

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UNITED NATIONS

UN official promotes gay rights

The UN's top human rights official urged countries Thursday to abolish legal discrimination against gays, days after the U.S. government said it would use foreign aid and diplomacy to promote gay equal rights.

The UN's High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, said governments should also outlaw all forms of abuse based on sexual orientation.

Pillay's appeal came in a report released Thursday to the 47-nation UN Human Rights Council, which in June passed the global body's first resolution condemning anti-gay discrimination. That vote was hailed by the U.S. but decried by some Muslim nations.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Russia scrambles to save whales

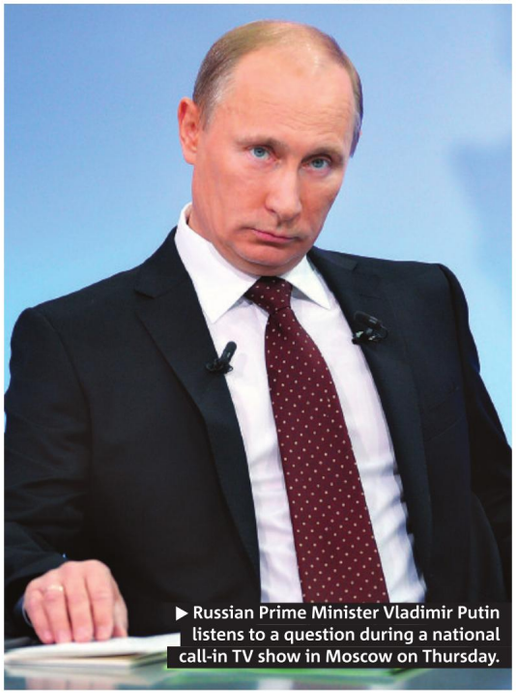
Russian agencies are trying to save some 100 beluga whales — an endangered species — that are trapped among large chunks of polar ice floating in the frigid Bering Sea.

Russia's nature protection watchdog says there is a chance that the whales might perish. Authorities say the ice is 10-15 centimetres thick and is preventing the whales from reaching the open sea where they can swim freely.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taking to the television

ALEXEI NIKOLSKY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



▶ Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin listens to a question during a national call-in TV show in Moscow on Thursday.

Putin, opposition give no ground amid unprecedented wave of discontent over recent Russian vote

Sharp-tongued and defiant, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin denounced those protesting vote fraud as stooges of the West and insisted that Russia's national election was valid. His opponents were undeterred.

In a four-and-a-half-hour marathon call-in show on national TV, Putin aimed to erect a bulwark against a rising wave of discontent. But his disdainful tone appeared likely to only fuel more protests, after a fraud-tainted parliamentary vote Dec. 4 sparked the largest public anger Russia has seen in a generation.

He dismissed opposition claims that vote fraud had given Putin's United Russia party a majority of the seats in parliament.

3,500

In a telling display of anger, the number of people who signed up on Facebook to go to the Dec. 24 rally increased from 18,000 to 21,500 just in the hours Putin was speaking.

The opposition was not mollified.

"The boorish, disdainful attitude toward the people that Putin demonstrated in today's television show was obvious," said Boris Nemtsov, a prominent opposition leader, in a blog post after the show.

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Canadians urged to get out of Syria

The federal government is again urging Canadians to get out of Syria while they still can.

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird says it is becoming increasingly difficult for Canadian diplomats and consular officials to do their jobs under restrictions imposed by President Bashar al-Assad.

"We are declaring a voluntary evacuation of all Canadians in Syria," Baird said. "We will provide specialized consular services to those who wish to leave.

"Our embassy in Damascus is also available to assist Canadians in Syria, as well as their spouses and their dependent children with the needed travel documents, visas, between now and Jan. 14, 2012."

SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

"The time to leave Syria is now."
JOHN BAIRD,
FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER

He said sanctions imposed by the Arab League will have significant impact on air transport to and from Syria and he's warning Canadians in the country they will have an increasingly difficult time making travel arrangements as the security situation deteriorates.

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▶ This amateur footage from TV made available by a group called Ugarit News on Thursday shows what appears to be a Syrian tank on fire in Homs, Syria, as gunfire rings out. The tank then apparently exploded. According to information released with this video, members of the al-Farouq brigade blew up the tank. The brigade is part of the Free Syrian Army and is reportedly made up of Syrian army defectors.

Defectors kill 27 Syrian soldiers

Attacks could lead to new cycle of escalation: Expert

Army defectors killed 27 government forces on Thursday in apparently coordinated attacks that were among the deadliest by rebel troops since the uprising began nine months ago.

The fighting began around daybreak in the southern province of Daraa, where the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad's authoritarian regime began in March.

Syria has seen a sharp escalation in armed clashes recently, raising concerns the country of 22 million is headed toward civil war.

Sanctions by Western powers, Turkey and the Arab League have added to the growing pressure on al-Assad from within Syria. U.S. State Department official Frederic Hof told Congress on Wednesday that al-Assad's repression may allow him to hang on to power, but only for a short time.

Still, the regime could exploit the escalation of armed attacks by military defectors to escalate the crackdown with full force on pockets of defectors concentrated in Daraa and the northwestern province of Idlib that borders Turkey.

Defectors from the Free Syrian Army, whose leaders are based in exile in neighbouring Turkey, fired a rocket-propelled grenade at a bus carrying policemen into the town of Busra al-Harir on Thursday, killing 12 officers, an activist based nearby said.

That set off clashes with an accompanying force of soldiers. The defectors killed 13 of them, said the activist, who would only agree to be identified by his first name, Omar, for fear of retribution.

The fighters then killed two more soldiers in an attack on a checkpoint, he said.

Busra al-Harir is home to about 300 army defectors who have been clashing with regime forces daily for nearly a week, he said.

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Chinese district to ban veils and beards?

A city district in heavily Muslim western China is apparently trying to tamp down religious fervour by prohibiting people from wearing veils, traditional Arab dress or growing long beards.

A notice from the Dunmaili district of Yining said the campaign's objective was "to completely get rid of the abnormal phenomenon in the entire community of minority ethnic women and youth wearing Arabian dress, growing beards and covering their faces in veils."

'Diehards' hit

- The notice said stubborn individuals who refused to give up their veils, Arab dress or long beards should be educated, and "diehards" turned over to judicial departments.

Yining is in Xinjiang, a region home to the traditionally Muslim Uighur ethnic group.

Many Uighurs resent Chinese rule and controls on their religion and culture and the region has occasionally seen violent unrest.

Xinjiang regional spokesperson Hou Hanmin said she was unaware of the campaign. She said people in Xinjiang are free to wear what they like.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BIKAS DAS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ A relative of a toxic-liquor victim cries at a hospital near Kolkata on Thursday.

Wails of grief over liquor toll

The lethal tide of bootleg booze

As relatives wailed in grief, the death toll from bootleg liquor containing toxic methanol climbed to 143 people, officials in eastern India said Thursday.

Dozens more were sickened after drinking the cheap, illicit brew.

Police arrested 10 suspected bootleggers.

Emergency medical teams rushed to a village outside Kolkata, and thousands of grieving relatives gathered outside a packed hospital.

Inside, dead bodies lay on the floor covered in quilts, while the ill waited on staircases to be treated.

Groups of men sat in the halls with saline drips running into their arms.

Abdul Gayen cried inconsolably for his son, Safiulla, a labourer who drank some of the liquor and then complained of lightheadedness.

"Why don't the police stop this? I cannot understand."
ANWAR HASSAN MULLAH, WHO BROUGHT SIX PEOPLE TO HOSPITAL. THEY ALL DIED.

When Safiulla woke the next morning, he fell and began frothing at the mouth, Gayen said.

He died before his family could get him to the hospital. "Safiulla was the lone bread earner in our family. I don't know what will happen to us now," he said.

Illegal liquor operations flourish in the slums of urban India and among the rural poor who can't afford the alcohol at state-sanctioned shops.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

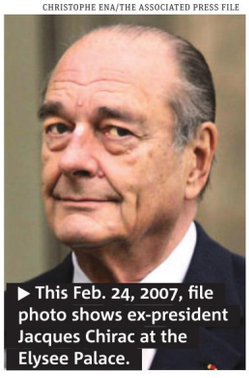
Jacques Chirac found guilty

As French president, Jacques Chirac was called all sorts of names, not the least for his vociferous opposition to the U.S.-led war in Iraq. Now, he has a moniker that will stick: Convicted criminal.

The avuncular 79-year-old on Thursday became France's first former leader to be convicted since Marshal Philippe Petain, who headed the Nazi collaborationist regime during World War II, in 1945. Chirac will not go to prison, but received a two-year suspended sentence for corruption linked to his 18-year term as the mayor of Paris.

In a statement hours after the decision, Chirac said though he "categorically contest(ed)" the verdict, he would not appeal. Despite the "pain and the profound sadness this verdict has inflicted," the statement said, "I sadly no longer have the necessary strength to lead before new judges the combat for the truth."

CHRISTOPHE ENA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE



▶ This Feb. 24, 2007, file photo shows ex-president Jacques Chirac at the Elysee Palace.

He said that as mayor, "it is up to me and me alone to take responsibility," but stressed that "above all, I affirm with honour: I cannot be blamed for anything."

Chirac was found guilty in two related cases involving 19 totally or partially fake jobs created for his benefit at the RPR party, which he led as Paris mayor from 1977 to 1995. He was convicted of embezzling public funds, abuse of trust and illegal conflict of interest. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Carlos the Jackal gets second life sentence

Carlos the Jackal, the flamboyant Venezuelan who symbolized Cold War terrorism, was sentenced to life in prison — again — in a Paris trial that ended late Thursday with him rallying for revolution and weeping for Moammar Gadhafi.

Carlos, whose real name is Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, hasn't seen freedom since French agents spirited him out of Sudan in a sack in 1994. He's already serving a life sentence in a French prison for a triple murder in 1975, the worst punishment meted out in a country that does not have the death penalty.

Once one of world's most-wanted men, the former gun-for-hire and self-proclaimed revolutionary was escorted out of his cell and back to court last month to face charges that he instigated four bombings in France in 1982 and 1983 that killed 11 people and injured more than 140 others.

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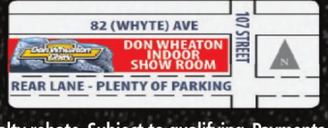

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China. Choco-chic

▶ A model shows off clothing partially made of chocolate during a chocolate fashion show in Shanghai, China, on Thursday.

EUGENE HOSHIKO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fashioned from chocolate

More than money at stake in developing Arctic: Report

Melting of permafrost due to climate change affecting infrastructure

Governments and businesses are being advised they must look beyond immediate economic benefits when it comes to paying for roads, ports and rail lines in the Arctic.

The Conference Board of Canada said in a report released Thursday that even though such projects are more expensive to build and maintain than they would be in the south, they're still worth it.

"If you've got an all-weather road into a community, it's a lot easier and cheaper to get goods and people into and out of those communities than if you're dependent on a winter road that's only open for an increasingly short number of weeks," said David Stewart-Patterson, the think-tank's vice-president.

"But it's not just about access to economic opportunities. It's access to essential public services."

Canada's North is poorly served by transportation infrastructure. Aside from private roads built for specific resource projects, Nunavut has only 21 kilometres of all-weather road in the entire territory. It has only one harbour, despite the fact almost all its communities are along shorelines.

The northern reaches of the provinces face similar limitations. The report says 25,000 people in northern Manitoba depend entirely on winter roads, the season for which is shrinking yearly.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

▶ A speed-limit sign along the road near the Meadowbank gold mine in Nunavut.

Market moment

PRICES AS OF 5 P.M. THURSDAY

TSX	Dollar
- 38.63 (11,504.42)	+ $0.36¢ (96.55¢ US)
Oil	**Natural gas**
- $1.08 US ($93.87 US)	$3.127 US (- 0.9¢ US)
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	$1,577.20 US (- 9.70 US)

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Canada Post No. 8 in G20

A British consulting firm says Canada Post has made it into the Top 10 postal services in the G20.

Oxford Strategic Consulting says Canada Post takes the No. 8 spot in its ranking of postal services in the G20 countries.

The ranking is based on postal service providers' performance over the three years from 2008-10 looking at access to services, efficiency and performance.

The U.S. Postal Service took the No. 1 spot, followed by Japan Post, Australia Post and Korea Post.

Oxford says the USPS topped the ranking due to its high operating efficiency over the three years — delivering eight times more letters per full-time delivery employee than Canada Post.

The report says the expansion of e-commerce means there is an even greater need for postal services to be fast, efficient and reliable — especially during the busy holiday season.

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GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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TECH TROUBLES

RIM profits plummet as brutal year continues

Research in Motion, the former darling of the smartphone industry, looked for investors' understanding as it reported lacklustre financial results and a delay on the product touted as the salvation of the troubled company.

The new generation of BlackBerrys expected to boost flagging revenues won't be in consumers' hands until late next year, RIM's chief executives said on Thursday, after the company's quarterly profit fell short of expectations.

"We ask for your patience and confidence," co-CEO and co-chairman Mike Lazaridis said after RIM reported a third-quarter net profit of only $256 million US, compared to $911 million for the same period last year.

The company's financial results signalled a continuation of the Icarus-like return to reality for RIM, which has been plagued by a spate of setbacks throughout 2011.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Greek civil servants stage walkout to protest cuts

PETROS GIANNAKOURIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Pensioners demonstrate against austerity measures in central Athens on Thursday.

IMF urges Greece to fire excess public servants and impose further cuts to make economy more competitive

Greek civil servants walked off the job for three hours on Thursday to protest austerity measures that include pension and salary cuts and the suspension of tens of thousands of workers on partial pay.

The work stoppage was to leave hospitals with emergency staff and shut down other public services from noon to 3 p.m. About 1,000 pensioners marched through central Athens to protest outside Parliament.

Prime Minister Lucas Papademos, meanwhile, was meeting with Greece's debt inspectors from the International Monetary Fund, European Central Bank and European Commission.

The country is negotiating the terms of a second massive rescue package, worth $169 billion US, with the eurozone and private bondholders.

On Wednesday, the IMF's top official in Greece urged the country to fire excess public servants and impose further cuts on workers' pay rights to reduce the size of the public sector and make the economy more competitive.

Poul Thomsen warned the government it would not be able to reduce its high budget deficits unless it focused on spending cuts, arguing that the country's taxpayers had reached the limit.

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A PIECE OF (EXPLETIVE) IN THEIR STOCKING

THE METRO LIST

PAUL SULLIVAN
METRO

We're makin' a list, checkin' it twice.
So you're gonna find out who's naughty and nice … which is especially important this time of year.

1 **Justin Trudeau** has been very naughty. The son of former Prime Potty Mouth Pierre Trudeau (remember "fuddle duddle"?) demonstrates that the rotten apple doesn't fall very far from the tree as he loses it in question period and refers to Environment Minister Peter Kent as the four-letter version of a piece of excrement. At least he's efficient.

2 **Canadians** confirm they are the world's most boring people by making the census and Canada Post their two fastest-rising Google searches. While the rest of the world made 14-year-old pop curiosity Rebecca Black their fastest-rising search for Friday, dubbed by critics as "the worst song ever," we're looking into overnight delivery and number of adults per household. We're soooo nice. Sigh.

3 **The Protester** is Time Magazine's Person of the Year. OK, you've occupied our media and our minds for the requisite 15 minutes. Time to lay down your pitchforks and your torches and go back to your farms and families. You've been naughty for a noble cause.

4 **Albert Pujols** has agreed to play baseball for the Los Angeles Angels for the next 10 years. In return the team has agreed to pay him $50,000 every time he steps up to the plate, even though his batting average has lost more than 50 points since the 2008 season. Nice! Albert Pujols is definitely a member of the one per cent. How come nobody tries to Occupy the Dugout?

5 **The Artist**, the silent movie, leads the Golden Globe nominations with six. Silence is, er, golden. Meanwhile, last weekend was the worst in modern box-office history. Is there a pattern here? Fortunately the notoriously naughty Robert Downey Jr. opens this week as Sherlock Holmes in A Game of Shadows. As the main competition is Alvin and the Chipmunks, Sherlock's duel with Professor Moriarty, the Nabob of Naughty, expects to gross more than $50 million.

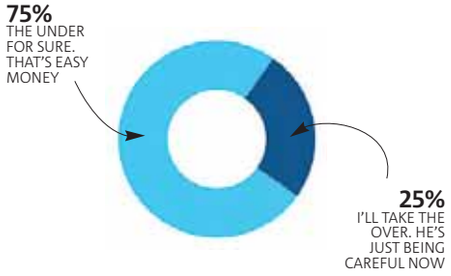
6 **The Higgs boson** has made it a pretty nice week for science nerds as the VBEM (Very Big Expensive Machine) at CERN in Switzerland has identified tantalizing hints that the Holy Grail of physics, a.k.a. the God particle, the elemental building block of Everything, exists. They seek it here; they seek it there; that damned elusive particle. Stay tuned for the exciting conclusion early in 2012.

7 **Justin Bieber** is the most searched image on Google in 2011. Overexposed. And not in a nice way.

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Bodog has set the over-under for games played by Sidney Crosby at 38.5. What would you take?



Local tweets

- **@GILKJONES:** @KerryDiotte. Thank u for standing up for edmonton #yeg
- **@Islayrose:** Hooray!!! No snow for the holidays!!!! That's a gift in itself #yeg
- **@JW752:** Does living in Edmonton make me sound rough? #yeg #murdercapital
- **@lucaswagner:** Made the mistake of taking the LRT out of Downtown during peak. This is almost as bad as MUNI after a Giants game. #yegtransit
- **@smithbardown:** #yeg I miss you and your Starbucks in the departures
- **@sit_walk:** Nothing against ebooks, but where has the case been made that they are environmentally friendly? #books #libraries #yeg
- **@MichelleMolineau:** Fresh mistletoe wanted. #yeg #flowers anyone have any leads?
- **@daydreambeth:** Hey nerdy Edmontonians! Where would I buy a Skyrim calendar? #yeg

LOS ANGELES COUNTY-USC MEDICAL CENTER /THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Daily Zoom

Tiny baby beats enormous odds

Second-smallest baby in the U.S.

Melinda Guido is pictured shortly after her birth in late August with the hand of Dr. Rangasamy Ramanathan as a comparison. Melinda was born at 24 weeks weighing 9.5 ounces.

She's believed to be the second smallest baby to survive in the U.S.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Girl power

- Most tiny babies who survive tend to be female because female fetuses mature faster than males.
- The smallest surviving baby, born weighing 9.2 ounces, is now a healthy seven-year-old. Another who weighed 9.9 ounces at birth is an honours college student.

"The first few weeks, it was touch and go. None of us thought the baby was going to make it."

DR. RANGASAMY RAMANATHAN

Two more weeks

Dr. Rangasamy Ramanathan predicted at least another two-week stay at the Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center for the premature baby, dashing her parents' hopes of taking her home by Christmas. Melinda can breathe by herself, but still uses an oxygen tube as a precaution.

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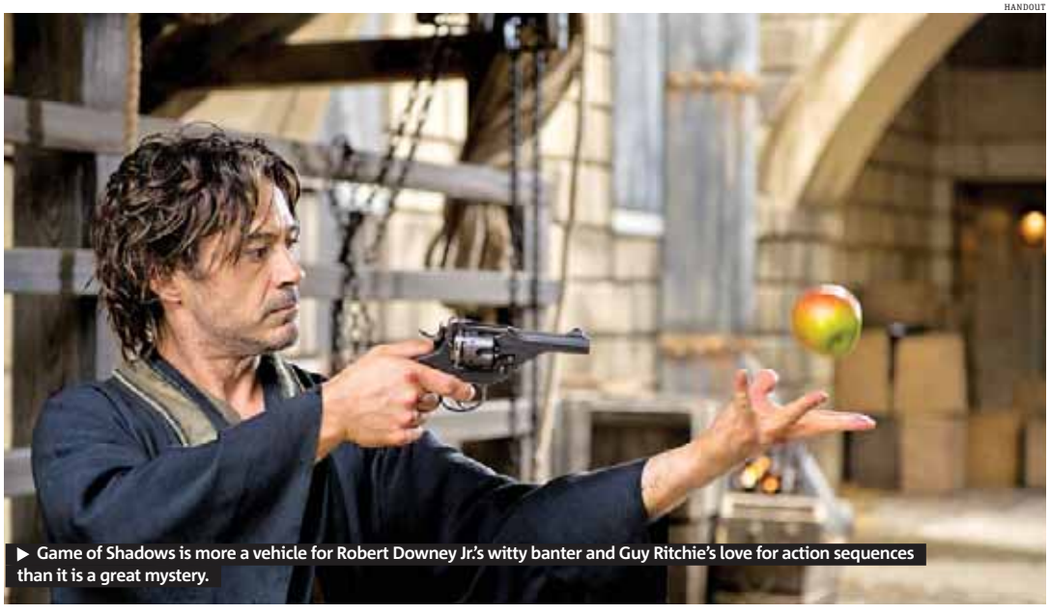
Synopsis

The puzzle at the heart of Sherlock Holmes: Game of Shadows begins with the death of the Crown Prince of Austria. Written off as a suicide, Holmes (Robert Downey Jr) deduces there is more to the story. Enter Watson (Jude Law), who should be on his honeymoon, a beautiful fortune-teller (Noomi Rapace, the original girl with the dragon tattoo), the evil Moriarty and more intrigue than you can shake a deerstalker hat at. This week the game's afoot with Reel Guy Ned Ehrbar!

Ratings:
Richard: ⊕⊕½
Ned: ⊕⊕⊕

HANDOUT



▶ Game of Shadows is more a vehicle for Robert Downey Jr.'s witty banter and Guy Ritchie's love for action sequences than it is a great mystery.

Reel Guys

RICHARD CROUSE & MARK BRESLIN
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA

Elementary plot

Game of Shadows is light on the storyline, but heavy on action and witty banter

Richard: Ned, there is no question that RDJ and Law bring a certain joie de vivre to the usually staid portrayal of the great detective and his loyal sidekick. They look like they're having a ball, probably more fun than the audience, in fact. As enjoyable as it is to watch these two riff off one another it soon becomes clear the whole movie is nothing more than a vehicle for their banter.

Ned: The banter is delightful, there's no denying that. But when they're not sniping at each other, you start to notice the plot doesn't really measure up to a detective of Holmes' stature — or offer any original ideas. Basically, if you don't want the movie spoiled for you, wipe the League of Extraordinary Gentlemen from your memory, as Moriarty's scheme is exactly the same in both movies. I'm assuming the filmmakers are banking on no one remembering that movie, though — which is a safe bet — but still.

RC: Agreed, if you can figure out the story. Confused and confusing, the plot zips along at such a rapid pace you'll barely know it doesn't make much sense because director Guy Ritchie fills the screen with wildly edited scenes anchored by Downey's flamboyant performance. It looks cool and will make you laugh occasionally, but the quips and extravagantly edited sequences are only fun in the moment. They don't add up to much of a movie.

NE: Some of those cool-looking scenes can grate, as well. A little bit of the Sherlock slow-mo fight analysis goes a long way, but since it got such a good reaction in the first film, Ritchie lays on the bullet time a little thick here. One element that did work for me though was Jared Harris' Moriarty, a dangerously brilliant villain with a plausible cover story as a mild-mannered professor. It's a shame he's not in the movie more, though.

RC: Harris has one seminal psycho moment — is there anything crazier than belting out an aria while torturing your nemesis? — but I didn't think Noomi Repace, while eye catching as Sim, was given enough to do to be truly memorable.

NE: True, she doesn't get much to do besides react to the dynamic duo's chicanery and drop helpful reminders about the plot. And the less said about RJD on a pony, the better. Still, audiences could do a lot worse.

2 scene

Scene in brief

Howard Stern will be joining the judges' panel on America's Got Talent, and the NBC summer talent show will uproot itself from Los Angeles to accommodate the New York-based shock jock, the network said Thursday. NBC confirmed weeks-old rumours of Stern's selection to join fellow Talent judges Howie Mandel and Sharon Osbourne.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Candy Spelling packs up, leaves Spelling Manor — the house that TV built — in HGTV special

Movie reviews See it twice | See it now | Worth watching | Yawn | Don't bother

Young Adult
Genre: Comedy
Director: Jason Reitman
Stars: Charlize Theron, Patton Oswalt, Patrick Wilson

Oscar-winner Charlize Theron takes the cartoon route in this downbeat story of an alcoholic author who proves you can't go home again. Especially when you're an emotional wreck intent on stealing your high school sweetheart from his wife and newborn.

Diablo Cody's premise is interesting, but the filmmakers aim low. The film lacks subtlety and complexity and glorifies the bratty inner child, when the grown-up in question should be trying desperately to locate her inner adult. The humour is mild, juvenile and lowbrow and veers into verboten territory as regional, sexist and somewhat homophobic.

ANNE BRODIE

Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chip-Wrecked
Genre: Animation
Director: Mike Mitchell
Stars: Justin Long, Matthew Gray Gubler, Jesse McCartney

Maybe the first sign of getting old is no longer finding the voices of Alvin and his chipmunk brethren entertaining or even intelligible. The plot for their third theatrical outing gets underway after the recalcitrant rodents get separated from the Carnival cruise ship (ingenious product placemen, that) and end up on that evergreen cartoon trope, the deserted island where zany adventures are had and lessons are learned. Kids movies generally succeed by having something in them for the dragged-along parents as well, but the only jokes to sail over kids' heads in Chip-Wrecked seem to make reference to Internet memes and popular YouTube videos, which just seems lazy more than anything.

NED EHRBAR

Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol
Genre: Action
Director: Brad Bird
Stars: Tom Cruise, Simon Pegg

In the fourth Mission Impossible thriller, Tom Cruise and his rogue team of spies must clear their name after it's framed for a terrorist plot against the Kremlin. It's a simple, underplayed plotline but an impressive vehicle for huge action sequences that include Cruise hanging off the Burj Khalifa in Dubai — even more stunning in IMAX. While the villain is bland and the supporting characters a bit thin, Ghost Protocol's intensity and pace returns Cruise to form as one of cinema's more thrilling spies.

STEVE GOW

LOOK AGAIN SPOT THE 10 DIFFERENCES IN THESE TWO IMAGES.

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1. Removed bush on the left side of image. 2. Removed tunnel behind the 2012 Chevrolet Equinox. 3. Removed brick from bridge above the 2012 Chevrolet Equinox. 4. Added tree above the bridge. 5. Removed stripe in the road. 6. Added a rock below the bridge. 7. Added an indent to the top of the bridge. 8. Removed a brick in the bridge to the right of the 2012 Chevrolet Equinox. 9. Added grass to the right of the road. 10. Turned on the fog lights on the 2012 Chevrolet Equinox

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Tintin's character rings true for Bell

Actor Jamie Bell talks about his childhood fascination with Hergé's detective ▶ Tintin a 'beacon of excellence'

RICHARD CROUSE
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA

Legend has it that when Steven Spielberg offered Jamie Bell the lead role in The Adventures of Tintin, the actor looked the Hollywood legend in the eye and said, "I'll have to think about it."

"What is true is that he said, 'If you were to be Tintin it would be about five years of your life. Are you comfortable with that?' To me, as a 16-year-old, five years was a really long time (he's 24 now). So I didn't want to be the naïve actor and say, 'OK, I'm fine with that. I wanted to really consider it. I don't even think I said I'd think about it, I just didn't give a definitive answer.

"For me it was more important to be sitting down at a table with him. Just sharing a Hollywood meeting with him was awesome. To me, as a child, he was otherworldly. He was a Houdini character who made dinosaurs live and boys fly on bicycles."

Bell, who first won hearts as the lead in coming-of-age-dance movie Billy Elliot, says getting to make the movie with Spielberg has "remarkable synergy" because "Tintin was one of his favourite childhood things."

Originally, he simply enjoyed the characters, he says, but there was something special that set the stories about the young detective apart from other kid's comics.

"It was different from all the other cartoons. I felt respected, as a kid, by Tintin. That allowed me to gravitate toward him and go on his adventures.

"I was a very inquisitive kid," he says. "I used to watch a lot of political satire comedy shows. I'm sure I had no idea what they were talking about, but they were funny to me. Grown-ups making fun of other grown-ups was hilarious.

"So when I read Tintin and he was travelling around the world solving political corruption, I just knew what was going on."

HANDOUT

▶ The Adventures of Tintin channels the spirit of the beloved books.

The film grabs the spirit of the beloved books, bringing some of the intensity — and mild violence — of the original Hergé books to the screen.

"If Tintin wasn't the beacon of excellence that he is," says Bell, "if he wasn't the guy with the correct moral compass, if he wasn't so innocently earnest all the time, I think that could be an issue.

"But because the character at the front is such a great, natural and instinctual heroic character, I think you kind of get away with it."

RICHARD ROEPER
"ONE OF THE BEST PERFORMANCES OF THE YEAR IN ONE OF THE BEST MOVIES OF 2011."

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DANIEL CRAIG AND ROONEY MARA

In exclusive one-on-ones, Metro interviewed the stars of this season's most anticipated film, asking what they think of one another, the book's dark tone and Bond, James Bond

THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO Q+A

Rape. Murder. Freezing cold weather. Happy holidays from the team behind The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, the latest adaptation of Stieg Larsson's international bestseller.

The book — about a journalist (Daniel Craig) who investigates a dysfunctional family's murder mystery, with help from anti-social hacker Lisbeth Salander (Rooney Mara) —has already spawned a successful Swedish film trilogy.

For Craig and Mara, it was a chance to work closely with director David Fincher. Mara appeared in his The Social Network. Tattoo is generating similar Oscar buzz, but it's not without its share of controversy and critics, thanks to some startlingly frank and sexual subject matter.

The set was lighthearted, though. As were the two actors at our chat….

DANIEL CRAIG

Now that you've played a journalist, do you have any more sympathy for journalists?
I've always loved journalists. I don't know where the story's come from, that I have a problem with journalists. I have a problem with intrusion — that's something different completely. But some of my heroes are journalists.

The opening credits made me think what a David Fincher Bond film might look like.
I could see him applying it to anything, really. I'd love to work with him again, and I'd do anything for him. David has a very happy set most of the time — as much as a set can ever be happy when you're filming very dramatic scenes.

There was some financial trouble with the Bond franchise over the last couple of years, but that made it possible for you to do this film.
That's true, it did, yes. I always knew it was going to work itself out. But I'd also kind of said to myself, if it doesn't work out somebody else is going to do it. That's the way it is. Bond will be fine, he'll keep going.

Tattoo has Oscar buzz, but do you worry that the roughness might scare off some voters?
Oh look, I can't think about all that. It's such a crazy period. If it offends a few people, good. I hope it does.

ROONEY MARA

Lisbeth is an iconic character, with piercings and a punk look. How collaborative was David Fincher with you regarding the look?
There were a lot of discussions about the character — about the way she looks, about the way she walks, about the way she talks, about her eye contact, about her mannerisms. But at the end of the day, you know, obviously I'm the person playing the character so he did give me a lot of freedom in that. There was always a lot of talking and a lot of collaboration.

Why do you think it is that when a female character is presented as strong and is in any way sexualized, some people dismiss it as exploitative or misogynistic?
I don't know, because people are stupid? (laughs) I don't know, that's true. I don't know why.

Because I think it scares people. Things that people aren't used to seeing or experiencing scares them. The thing that's so interesting about this character is that she has these two different sides. She's perfectly capable of taking care of herself, but at the same time she's vulnerable and put in these horrible positions.

She's wise beyond her years and incredibly bright, but at the same time she's emotionally stunted at 12 years old and is naïve and doesn't have a lot of experience with other people.

So I think that's what makes her so interesting, that she has these opposing sides. She's been sexually abused, but at the same time she's very sexual.

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., DEC. 16 TO THURS., DEC. 22. TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. COMPLETE LISTINGS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT METRONEWS.CA/MOVIES.

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The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo (18A) Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes Tue 8 Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes Wed-Thu 12:30-4:30-8
Hugo 3D (PG) Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Fri-Tue 12:20-3:20-6:40-9:40 Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Wed-Thu 12:10-3:10-6:40-9:40
Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating Tue 7:05-10:10 Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 12:55-4:7:05-10:10
The Muppets (G) Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Fri 1-4:7:30-10:30 Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Sat-Tue 12:10-3:10-7:10-10:10 Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Wed-Thu 12-3:7:10-10:10
My Week With Marilyn (14A) Bargain Matinee, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 1:15-4:15:7:35-10:35 Bargain Matinee, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Mon 1:15-4:15-10:35 Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Tue 1-4:7:35-10:35 Bargain Matinee, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 1-4:10-7:25-10:25
New Year's Eve (PG) Bargain Matinee, Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating Fri-Mon 12:30-3:30-6:45-9:45 Bargain Matinee, Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating Tue 12:30-3:30-6:30-9:30 Bargain Matinee, Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 12:20-3:30-6:30-9:30
Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (STC) Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating, Bargain Matinee Fri-Mon 12:15-3:15-7:10 Dolby Stereo Digital, No Passes, Stadium Seating, Bargain Matinee Tue-Thu 12:15-3:15-6:45-9:45
The Sitter (14A) Bargain Matinee, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Mon 1-4:7:25-10:25 Bargain Matinee, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Tue 1:05-4:05-7:25-10:25 Bargain Matinee, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 1:15-4:15-7:35-10:35
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating, Bargain Matinee Fri 1:05-3:6:30-9:30 Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating, Bargain Matinee Sat-Mon 1:05-4:05-7:30-10:30 Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating, Bargain Matinee Tue 1:15-4:15
The Way (PG) Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Fri 4:05-7:30-10:30 Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Sat-Mon 12-3-6:30-9:30 Bargain Matinee, Stadium Seating, DTS Digital Tue 12-3
Young Adult (14A) Bargain Matinee, Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 12:45-3:45-7:20-10:20

CLAREVIEW 10 CINEMAS
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The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) Wed-Thu 6:30-9:15
Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G) Fri 6:40-7:10-9-9:25 Sat-Sun 1:15-1:40-3:30-4-6:40-7:10-9-9:25 Mon-Tue 6:40-7:10-9-9:25 Wed-Thu 7-9:20
Arthur Christmas (G) Sat-Sun 12:50
Arthur Christmas 3D (G) Fri 6:30-9 Sat-Sun 3:20-6:30-9 Mon-Thu 6:30-9
The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo (18A) , No Passes Tue-Thu 8
Happy Feet Two (G) Sat-Sun 1
Jack and Jill (PG) Fri 7-9:15 Sat-Sun 1:50-4:10-7-9:15 Mon-Thu 7-9:15
Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol (14A) , No Passes Tue 6:30-9:40 , No Passes Wed-Thu 6:40-9:40
The Muppets (G) Fri 6:35-9:10 Sat-Sun 1:10-3:45-6:35-9:10 Mon 6:35-9:10
New Year's Eve (PG) Fri 6:45-9:30 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:40-6:45-9:30 Mon-Thu 6:45-9:30
Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (STC) , No Passes Fri 6:30-6:50-9:20-9:45 , No Passes Sat-Sun 1-3:25-3:50-6:30-6:50-9:20-9:45 , No Passes Mon 6:30-6:50-9:20-9:45 , No Passes Tue-Thu 6:50-9:45
The Sitter (14A) Fri 7:20-9:40 Sat-Sun 2-4:15-7:20-9:40 Mon-Thu 7:20-9:40
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG) Fri 6:40-9:35 Sat-Sun 1:20-4-6:40-9:35 Mon-Thu 6:40-9:35

METRO CINEMA
Zeidler Hall, Citadel Theatre Complex, 9828-101 Ave., 780-425-9212,

Akira (STC) Tue 9:15
Cannibal! The Musical (STC) Fri 11:30
Die Hard 2 (STC) Wed 9:15
Higher Ground (14A) Fri 7 Sat 2-9:15 Sun 7 Mon-Tue 9:15 Wed-Thu 7
It's a Wonderful Life (STC) Sun 4
Little Annie Rooney (STC) Sat 7 Sun 2
Santa Claus Conquers the Martians (STC) Fri 9:15 Sat 4 Sun 9:15 Mon 7
Saturday Morning All You Can Eat Cereal Cartoon Party (STC) Sat 10
Turkey Shoot: Santa Claus the Movie (STC) Thu 9:30

MOVIES 12
5074 130 Ave., 780-472-9779

The Dirty Picture (14A) Fri-Thu 12:55-4:45-8
Dolphin Tale 3D (G) Fri-Thu 1:10-3:50-6:30-9:25
Drive (18A) Fri-Thu 1:25-4:50-7:15-9:35
Footloose (PG) Fri-Thu 1:30-4:05-7:10-9:45
The Help (PG) Fri-Thu 12:55-4:20-7:30
The Ides of March (14A) Fri-Thu 1:35-4:25-7:25-9:55
Johnny English Reborn (PG) Fri-Thu 1:20-4:35-6:50-9:15
Ladies vs. Ricky Bahl (PG) Fri-Thu 1:05-4:30-7:50
Moneyball (PG) Fri-Thu 1:15-4:40-7:45
Paranormal Activity 3 (14A) Fri-Thu 1:40-4:30-7:20-9:40
The Smurfs (G) Fri-Thu 1:55-4:15-6:40-9:20
The Three Musketeers 3D (PG) Fri-Thu 1:20-3:45-6:35-9:30

NORTH EDMONTON CINEMAS
14231 137th Ave., 780-732-2236

The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 1:30-4:10-7:15-9:50
Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:12:40-2:10-3-4:30-5:20-6:40-9
Arthur Christmas (G) Fri-Thu 12:10
Arthur Christmas 3D (G) Fri-Wed 2:30-4:50-7:25-9:45 Thu 2:30-4:50-9:45
The Descendants (14A) Fri-Mon 12:30-3:10-7-9:50
The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo (18A) No Passes Tue-Thu 8:15 No Passes Tue 7:10:30 No Passes Wed-Thu 12-3:20-6:45-10:15
Happy Feet Two (G) Fri-Sun 1:30-4:10-6:40-9:10 Tue 1:30-4:10
Hugo 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 1-3:45-7:15-10:05 Mon 1-3:45-10:05 Tue 1-3:45
Immortals 3D (18A) Fri-Sat 2-5-8-10:35 Sun 5-8-10:35 Tue 2-5
Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol (14A) No Passes Tue 7:30-9-10:30 No Passes Wed-Thu 12:30-1:10-3:30-4:20-6:30-7:30-9:30-10:30
The Muppets (G) Fri-Tue 1:10-3:50-6:50-9:30 Wed-Thu 1-3:50-6:50-9:40
New Year's Eve (PG) Fri-Thu 12:50-3:40-7:10-10
The Nutcracker - Bolshoi Ballet Encore (STC) Sun 1 Mon 6:30
Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (STC) No Passes Fri-Mon 12:20-3:20-6:20-9:20 No Passes Tue 1:40-4:40-6:30-7:40-9:30-10:40 No Passes Wed 12:20-3:10-4:40-6:20-7:40-9:20-10:40 No Passes Thu 12:20-1:40-3:10-4:40-6:20-7:40-9:20-10:40 No Passes Fri-Mon 1:40-4:40-7:40-10:40 No Passes Tue 12:20-3:20 Star & Strollers Screening, No Passes Wed 1
The Sitter (14A) Fri-Tue 1:50-4:15-6:30-8:30-10:40 Wed-Thu 2-5-7:50-10:45
Tower Heist (PG) Fri-Mon 7:40-10:20
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG) Fri-Thu 1:20-4-7:20-10:10
Young Adult (14A) Fri-Tue 1:50-4:45-8-10:20 Wed 4:45-8-10:20 Thu 1:50-4:45-8-10:20 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1

PRINCESS I & II
10337 Whyte Ave., 780-433-0728

The Descendants (14A) Fri 6:50-9:10 Sat-Sun 12:30-6:50-9:10 Mon-Thu 6:50-9:10
Margin Call (14A) Fri 7-9:20 Sat-Sun 2:30-7-9:20 Mon-Thu 7-9:20

SCOTIABANK THEATRE WEST MALL
8882 170th St., 780-444-2400

The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 12:50-3:50-6:50-9:40
Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G) No Passes Fri-Sat 11:15-12-1:45-2:30-4:15-5-6:40-9:10 No Passes Sun 11:20-12-1:45-2:30-4:15-5-6:40-9:10 No Passes Mon-Tue 11:15-12-1:45-2:30-4:15-5-6:40-9:10 No Passes Wed 11-12-2:30-4:15-5-6:40-9:10 No Passes Thu 11:15-12-1:45-2:30-4:15-5-6:40-9:10 Star & Strollers Screening, No Passes Wed 1
Arthur Christmas 3D (G) Fri-Mon 12:50-3:50-6:30-9:15 Tue 12:50-3:50
The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo (18A) No Passes Tue 7:10:30 No Passes Wed-Thu 11:45-3:15-6:45-10:30
Happy Feet Two (G) Fri-Sat 11:30-2:15-4:50 Sun 11:35-2:15 Mon-Thu 11:30-2:15-4:50
Hugo 3D (PG) Fri-Thu 12:20-3:20-6:30-9:30
Immortals 3D (18A) Fri 1:30-4:30-7:40-10:40 Sat 2:15-5-7:40-10:40 Sun-Thu 1:30-4:30-7:40-10:40
Jack and Jill (PG) Fri-Sat 7:30-10 Sun 10 Mon-Tue 7:30-10
Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol (14A) No Passes Tue 7:10:15 No Passes Wed-Thu 12:45-4:7:15-10:30
Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol: The IMAX Experience (14A) No Passes Fri-Thu 11-2-5-8-11
The Muppets (G) Fri-Tue 1-4-6:45-9:20 Wed-Thu 7:30-10
New Year's Eve (PG) Fri-Tue 1:10-4:10-7:10-9:50 Wed 4:10-7:10-9:50 Thu 1:10-4:10-7:10-9:50 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (STC) No Passes Fri-Thu 7:45-10:45 No Passes Fri-Thu 12:30-3:40-7:10-15
The Sitter (14A) Fri-Thu 12:10-2:20-4:40-7:50-10:20
Tower Heist (PG) Fri-Mon 12:40-3:30-6:50-9:40 Tue 12:40-3:30
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG) Fri-Thu 1:20-4:20-7:20-10:10
WWE TLC: Tables, Ladders & Chairs - 2011 (STC) Sun 6

SOUTH EDMONTON COMMON
1525 99th St., 780-436-8585

The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 1-4:15-7:15-9:55
Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G) No Passes Fri-Sat 11:30-1:10-2:05-3:30-4:30-5:50-8:15-10:35 No Passes Sun 12-12:30-2:20-2:50-4:40-5:20-7:40-9:50 No Passes Mon 12:30-1:40-2:50-4:05-7:10-9:35 No Passes Tue 12:30-1:40-2:50-4:05-6:30-9:15 No Passes Wed-Thu 12:25-1:10-3:3:50-5:20-7:55-10:15
Arthur Christmas (G) Fri-Sun 12:25 Mon-Tue 12:45 Wed-Thu 11:35
Arthur Christmas 3D (G) Fri-Sun 2:55-5:25-7:55-10:25 Mon-Tue 3:40-7:40-10:15 Wed-Thu 2:05-4:35-7:10-9:40
The Descendants (14A) Fri-Sat 11:30-2:20-5:10-8-10:50 Sun 1:10-4:05-7:20-10:10 Mon-Tue 1:3:55-6:55-9:45
The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo (18A) No Passes Tue 7-7:10-10:35-10:40 No Passes Wed-Thu 11:30-12-3:3:30-6:30-7:10-10:30
Happy Feet Two (G) Fri-Sat 12:05-2:45-5:20-8:05-10:40 Sun 1:30-4:15-7-9:35 Mon 1:25-4:10-6:45-9:40 Tue 1:25-4:10
Hugo 3D (PG) Fri-Sat 1:05-4:7:05-10 Sun 12:15-3:20-6:10-9:20 Mon-Tue 12:35-3:45-7:05-10 Wed-Thu 1:35-4:25-7:40-10:30
Immortals (18A) Wed-Thu 1:30-4:30-7:35-10:25
Immortals 3D (18A) Fri 1:25-4:10-7:15-9:55 Sat 4:10-7:15-9:55 Sun 5:15-8-10:35 Mon 1:35-4:35-10:10 Tue 1:35-4:35-7:20-10:10
Jack and Jill (PG) Fri-Sat 11:55-2:30-4:50-7:15 Sun 12:05-2:25-4:45-7:15 Mon-Tue 1:45-4:45
The Metropolitan Opera: Don Giovanni - Encore (STC) Sat 10:55
Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol (14A) No Passes Fri 1:15-4:20-7:25-10:30 No Passes Sat 2-5-8-11 No Passes Sun-Thu 1:15-4:20-7:25-10:30 No Passes Tue 7:05-10:05 No Passes Wed-Thu 12:30-3:45-7:40-10:45
The Muppets (G) Fri-Sat 11:40-2:15-5:7:40-10:20 Sun 12:50-3:50-6:30-9:15 Mon-Tue 12:40-3:50-6:40-9:20 Wed-Thu 12:15-3:10-6:50-9:35
New Year's Eve (PG) Fri 2:10-5:15-8:20-11:15 Sat 1:25-4:15-7:20-10:15 Sun 1:15-4:30-7:30-10:20 Mon 12:50-3:50-7:20-9:25 Tue 12:50-3:50-7:20-10:30 Wed 1:40-4:55-7:45-10:35 Thu 4:55-7:45-10:35 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
The Nutcracker - Bolshoi Ballet Encore (STC) Sun 1 Mon 6:30
Puss in Boots (G) Fri-Sat 11:35-1:55-4:25-7:30-9:50 Sun 12:40-3:10-7:25 Mon 2-4:50-7:30-9:55 Tue 2-4:50
Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (STC) No Passes Fri-Sat 1:40-4:40-7:7:45-10:10-10:45 No Passes Sun 1-4-7:7:30-10:05-10:30 No Passes Mon-Tue 12:55-4:7:7:20-9:50-10:20 No Passes Wed-Thu 12:55-4-6:45-7:20-9:50-10:20
The Sitter (14A) Fri-Sat 1:30-3:45-6-8:20-10:25 Sun 12:10-2:40-5-7:45-10:15 Mon-Tue 2:15-4:30-6:50-9:30 Wed-Thu 1:25-4:05-7:05-9:45
Tower Heist (PG) Fri-Sat 9:45 Sun 9:40 Mon 9:45
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG) Fri-Sat 1:20-4:15-7:10-10:05 Sun 12:35-3:40-6:40-9:30 Mon-Tue 1:20-4:15-7:15-10:05 Wed-Thu 1:45-4:50-7:50-10:40
WWE TLC: Tables, Ladders and Chairs (STC) Sun 6
Young Adult (14A) Fri-Sat 12:40-3:10-5:40-8:10-10:40 Sun 12:2:30-5:10-7:35-10 Mon 1:30-4:40-7:30-9:55 Tue 1:30-4:40-7:20-9:55 Wed 1:20-3:40-7:30-10:05 Thu 3:40-7:30-10:05 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1

GRANDIN THEATRES
101-22 Sir Winston Churchill Ave., St. Albert, 780-458-9822

Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G) No Passes Fri-Tue 1:05-3-5-6:55-8:45
Arthur Christmas (G) Fri-Tue 12:45-2:45-4:50-7:05
The Muppets (G) Fri-Tue 1:10-3:20-5:20-7:25-9:25
New Year's Eve (PG) Fri-Tue 12:30-2:50-5:05-7:15-9:30
Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (STC) No Passes Fri-Tue 1:45-4:30-7-9:20
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG) Fri-Tue 9

GALAXY CINEMAS SHERWOOD PARK
2020 Sherwood Dr., Sherwood Park 780-416-0152

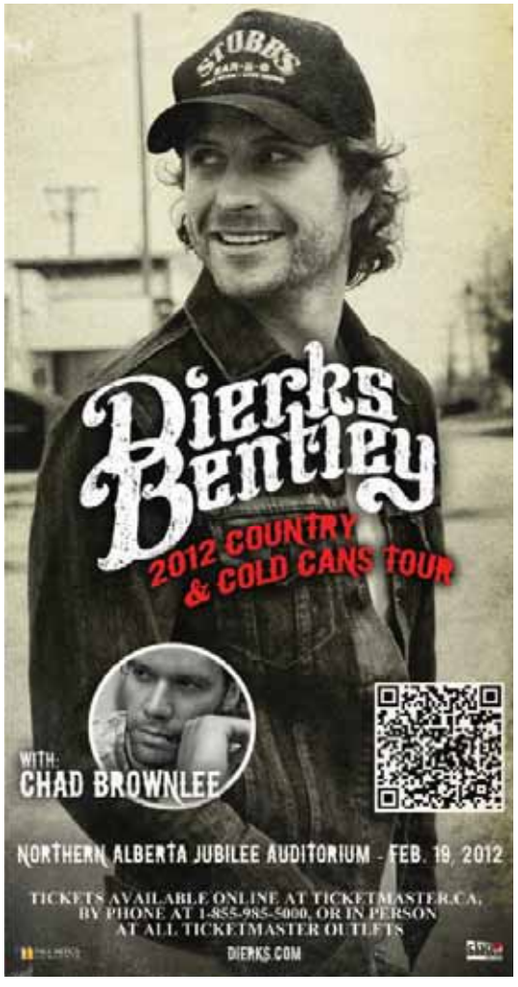
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 7:40-10:20
Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G) No Passes Fri 5:10-7:40-10 No Passes Sat-Sun 12:30-2:50-5:10-7:40-10 No Passes Mon-Tue 7:40-10 No Passes Wed-Thu 6:50-9:30
Arthur Christmas (G) Sat-Sun 1:10
Arthur Christmas 3D (G) Fri-Sun 3:50-6:40-9:20 Mon-Tue 6:40-9:20 Wed-Thu 6:40-9:40
The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo (18A) No Passes Tue-Thu 7:10:30
Happy Feet Two 3D (G) Fri 3:30-6:30-9:10 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:30-6:30-9:10 Mon-Tue 6:30-9:10
Hugo 3D (PG) Fri 3:45-6:45-9:30 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:45-6:45-9:30 Mon 6:45-9:30
Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol (14A) No Passes Tue 7:15-10:35 No Passes Wed-Thu 7:10-10:10
The Muppets (G) Fri 4:20-7-9:50 Sat-Sun 1:20-4:20-7-9:50 Mon 7-9:50 Tue 7:05-9:50 Wed-Thu 6:30-9:20
New Year's Eve (PG) Fri 4:30-7:20-10:10 Sat-Sun 1:30-4:30-7:20-10:10 Mon-Tue 7:20-10:10 Wed-Thu 7:20-10:15
Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (STC) No Passes Fri 4-7:10-10:20 No Passes Sat-Sun 1-4-7:10-10:20 No Passes Mon-Tue 7:10-10:20 No Passes Wed-Thu 7:30-10:40
The Sitter (14A) Fri 4:30-7:30-9:40 Sat-Sun 2-4:30-7:30-9:40 Mon-Tue 7:30-9:40 Wed-Thu 7:50-10
Tower Heist (PG) Fri 4:50-7:50-10:30 Sat-Sun 1:40-4:50-7:50-10:30 Mon 7:50-10:30
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG) Fri 3:40-6:50-9:45 Sat-Sun 12:40-3:40-6:50-9:45 Mon-Tue 6:50-9:45 Wed-Thu 6:45-9:50

PARKLAND CINEMA
130 Century Crossing, Spruce Grove 780-962-2332

Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G) Fri 7:05-9:05 Sat-Sun 1:05-3:05-7:05-9:05 Mon 7:05-9:05 Tue 1:05-3:05-7:05-9:05 Wed-Thu 7:05-9:05
Arthur Christmas (G) Fri 6:55-9 Sat-Sun 12:55-3-6:55-9 Mon 6:55-9 Tue 12:55-3-6:55-9 Wed-Thu 6:55-9
Happy Feet Two (G) Sat-Sun 12:40-3:15 Tue 12:40-3:15
The Muppets (G) Fri 7:05-9:10 Sat-Sun 1:05-3:10-7:05-9:10 Mon 7:05-9:10 Tue 1:05-3:10-7:05-9:10 Wed-Thu 7:05-9:10
New Year's Eve (PG) Fri 7-9:20 Sat-Sun 1-3:20-7-9:20 Mon 7-9:20 Tue 1-3:20-7-9:20 Wed-Thu 7-9:20
Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (STC) Fri 6:50-9:25 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:25-6:50-7:25 Mon 6:50-7:25 Tue 12:50-3:25-6:50-7:25 Wed-Thu 6:50-7:25
The Sitter (14A) Fri 6:45-8:50 Sat-Sun 12:45-2:50-6:45-8:50 Mon 6:45-8:50 Tue 12:45-2:50-6:45-8:50 Wed-Thu 6:45-8:50
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG) Fri-Thu 6:40-9:15

LEDUC CINEMAS
4702 50th St., Leduc 780-986-2728

Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G) Fri 7:10-9:20 Sat-Sun 1:10-3:20-7:10-9:20 Mon-Tue 7:10-9:20
Hugo 3D (PG) Fri-Tue 6:50-9:25
The Muppets (G) Sat-Sun 1:05-3:20
New Year's Eve (PG) Fri 7-9:30 Sat-Sun 1-3:30-7-9:30 Mon-Tue 7-9:30
Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (STC) Fri 6:55-9:35 Sat-Sun 12:55-3:35-6:55-9:35 Mon-Tue 6:55-9:35



Golden Globe winners, losers

With nominations announced Thursday, The Artist earned the most at six ▶ Here's who looks good and who doesn't

NED EHRBAR
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA
METRO WORLD NEWS IN HOLLYWOOD

Awards season officially kicks off with the nominations for the 2012 Golden Globes, and as usual the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) didn't disappoint by both focusing the Oscar race and throwing in a few head-scratchers. Here's the breakdown.

BIGGEST WINNERS

Woody Allen should be smiling. Long a favourite of the HFPA, the director's latest film, Midnight in Paris, gets an impressive awards-season boost thanks to its four Globe nods, including both screenplay and directing for Allen.

And between his acting in The Descendants and directing in The Ides of March, George Clooney will have plenty of reasons to show up.

Ryan Gosling is certainly enjoying his nominations in both Best Actor categories.

As far as sheer numbers, silent film The Artist — an Oscar front-runner since making a splash at Cannes — had the most nominations at six, but The Help and The Descendants are close behind at five.

Usual awards heavyweights the Weinstein Company and HBO lead the film and TV packs with 12 and 18 nominations, respectively.

British series Downton Abbey, which airs in the U.S. as part of Masterpiece Theater, received the most TV nominations, with four.

▶ Ryan Gosling was nominated for two Best Actor awards.

BIGGEST SNUBS

The most glaring omission to awards watchers is Stephen Spielberg. Even though his two films, War Horse and The Adventures of Tintin, are nominated, he was edged out of the directing category.

David Fincher might be feeling overlooked as well, as his The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo only pulled in nominations for Trent Reznor's score and Rooney Mara's performance.

Also, not a single nomination for British spy thriller Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy.

And on the TV side, fans were hoping critical darling Community could pick up some Comedy nominations to help its fight against impending cancellation, but the series was completely overlooked.

BIGGEST SURPRISES

Many had believed Disney would run The Help on the Musical or Comedy side for the Globes, giving the popular hit an easier chance at picking up some trophies, but its inclusion in Drama means presumed Oscar front-runners Viola Davis and Meryl Streep (for The Iron Lady) are going head-to-head earlier than expected.

In TV, the biggest shock has to be the HFPA's apparent love of Ryan Murphy. While a Best Series — Musical or Comedy nod for Glee isn't surprising, the organization apparently flipped for his new less-than-acclaimed horror series, American Horror Story, giving it mentions for Best Series, Drama and Best Supporting Actress for Jessica Lange.

BIGGEST REASON TO WATCH

Aside from the showdown between Streep and Davis, the other big reason to watch is to see what Ricky Gervais does to make the HFPA regret inviting him back as host.

The organization is notorious for its love of celebrities, so, not so surprising are nominations for Clooney, Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie — her In the Land of Blood and Honey is up for Best Foreign Language Film.

If Johnny Depp shows up to support Best Animated Feature nominee Rango, they'll have done their job.

Mark your calendar

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8 modern Hanukkah songs

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While the songbook for Judaism's festival of lights still lags well behind Christmas, the holiday has been punching above its weight class in recent years. Adam Sandler's Hanukkah song, originally performed on SNL's Weekend Update in 1994, really got the wax spinning on the modern age of Hanukkah tuneage. Get your Hanukkah groove on with one modern track for each night of the celebration.

1. CANDLELIGHT
by Maccabeats
This clever parody of Dynamite by Taio Cruz has racked up more than 5.7 million views on YouTube. The Maccabeats, an a cappella group composed of students from New York's Yeshiva University, have performed at Madison Square Garden and The White House.

2. MIRACLE
by Matisyahu
The Hasidic reggae star known for his prodigious beat-boxing skills brings us a sweet and spiritual holiday ballad. And in the video, Matisyahu showcases his lighter side by getting hip-checked on a skating rink and having a surreal daydream where he tangles with King Antiochus, some random hockey goons and the Nutcracker.

3. LONELY JEW ON CHRISTMAS
by Trey Parker
Kyle Broflovski's tender yet occasionally potty-mouthed tour de force from South Park's famous Mr. Hankey, the Christmas Poo episode from season one. Thanks to Kyle and Mr. Hankey, the denizens of the fictional Colorado town learn that Christmas and Chanukah can coexist.

4. HOW DO YOU SPELL CHAN-

HANDOUT

▶ South Park has their own take on the tunes.

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They can Dø no wrong

PAT HEALY
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA
METRO WORLD NEWS IN BOSTON

Both Ways Open Jaws, the recently released album by The Dø, enters through a rare window in time where it will probably make a lot of music publications' and Internet Best of 2011 lists.

Then when writers who don't put them on that list see that some of their peers have chosen it, the French duo's album will inevitably make their 'ones to watch' in 2012 lists.

This album is the second for The Dø. With their debut, A Mouthful, they became the first English-speaking French act to top the charts in their homeland.

"I spoke Finnish and French when I started speaking," says Merilahti.

"Then I just listened to so many different (English-speaking/writing) singers and I really wanted to know what the songs were about, so I always read the booklets very carefully and wanted to learn the words I didn't know. That's how I built my vocabulary."

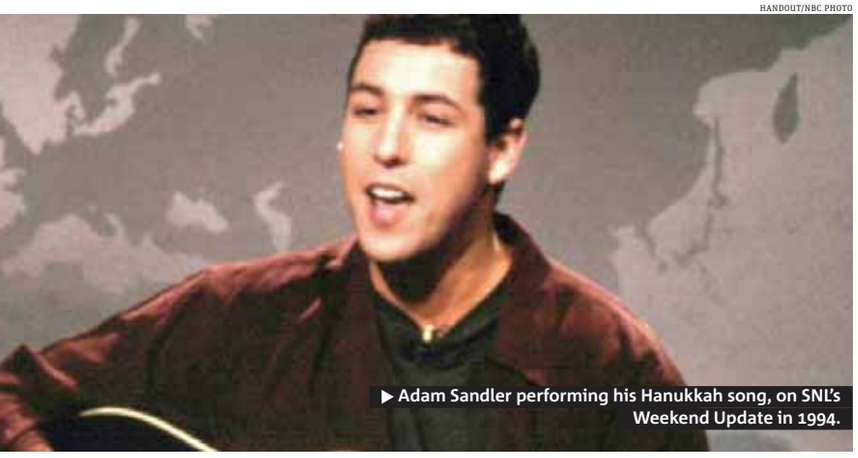
Despite the language gap, the music remains very open and has an ability to relate to listeners and draw them in.

"I really have a certain distance with the lyrics and they're all so very intimate," she says.

"It's very difficult for me to describe."

▶ Singer Olivia Bouyssou Merilahti of The Dø

HANDOUT/NBC PHOTO



▶ Adam Sandler performing his Hanukkah song, on SNL's Weekend Update in 1994.

NUKKAHH?
by The LeeVees
The holiday is spelled a few ways, with Hanukkah and Chanukah being the most popular. This is the most memorable track off 2005's Hanukkah Rocks album, a collaboration between Guster's Adam Gardner and The Zambonis' Dave Schneider.

5. FEAST OF LIGHTS
by They Might Be Giants
These quirky indie rock darlings known for the catchy geek anthems Birdhouse In Your Soul and Malcolm in the Middle theme song Boss Of Me concoct a downbeat ode to the holiday blahs.

6. MEMORIES OF A WINTER'S NIGHT
by David Koz
The lone instrumental Chanukah track on our list comes courtesy of butter-smooth saxophone player Koz, the heir apparent to Kenny G. The twinkling piano and vibrant sax solos are very seasonal

7. HANUKKAH BLESSINGS by Barenaked Ladies
One of a trio of Hanukkah tracks on BNL's Barenaked for the Holidays album from 2004. On this earnest medley, Stephen Page weaves both of Hanukkah's candle-lighting blessings into the song, adding religious heft to the tune.

8. LOVE YOU BETTER
by The Maccabees
While these Brighton-based Brit-poppers claim they picked their band name by randomly skimming the Bible, by adopting the namesake of the heroes of Chanukah, the small yet determined Jewish rebel army who rose up against their Syrian-Greek oppressors, their music is certainly holiday appropriate.

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Their name

Why Dø they call themselves that?

▶ **What's in a name** The Dø pronounce their name like 'dough' as in the first note of the solfège scale, as in do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti-do. But what is that little slash through the o? "We just wanted it to look like a note, like when you write music in music theory," says Merilahti. "It really looks like a musical symbol."

There are hints of influences all over Both Ways Open Jaws, but instead of rattling them off as reference points, we gave Merilahti a chance to confirm or deny them.

▶ **Did you listen to Stereolab growing up?** No, not at all, and someone told me about them a couple of days ago. They said, 'You should tour with Stereolab if they still played together,' or something. Maybe Dan has, but I'm not sure.

▶ **How about Radiohead?** It's kind of a late reference for both of us. ... Dan didn't listen to many songs when he was younger. He was more into instrumental and 20th century classical music or jazz, and I was always like, 'Oh everyone's listening to Radiohead,' so I wouldn't. ... But it's kind of impossible to ignore.

PAT HEALY/METRO BOSTON

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LAST MINUTE GIFT IDEAS FOR YOUR AUDIOPHILE

SOUND CHECK

ALAN CROSS
SCENE
@METRONEWS.CA

With a week to go, what do you get the music fan on your list?

Here's what I'm hoping to find under the tree. Not that I'm hinting or anything…

Bob Marley headphones
Everyone from Dr. Dre on down seems to get into the celebrity-endorsed headphone game. The new Positive Vibration headphones from the House of Marley sound good and are reasonably priced. They also come in a variety of colour schemes including Rasta. (thehouseofmarley.com)

Deluxe edition of The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo Soundtrack
Yes, there is life beyond Nine Inch Nails. After winning an Oscar for the soundtrack for The Social Network, Trent Reznor and partner Atticus Ross wrote the music for the Hollywood version of Stieg Larsson's best-selling novel. You can spend as little as $12 for a download or $300 for this deluxe edition featuring CDs, vinyl and autographs in an ornate box. Yes, I said $300. (nullco.com/GDT/)

Electronic Rock Guitar Shirt
It looks like a regular T-shirt with a guitar on the front.

The difference is that you can actually play this guitar. Each button on the neck corresponds to a major chord so anyone can play it. It even comes with an amp that you clip to your belt. Endless fun for about $20. (thinkgeek.com)

Giant Boombox Dock for iPod/iPhone
Remember the '80s when everyone carried around cassette players the size of suitcases that weighed as much as a small child? Now you can relive those backaches with an i-dock that needs 6D batteries. And it's just $200. (ihomeaudio.com/iP4ZC)

Ramones Throbbleheads
They're just like bobbleheads except cooler. Start with the Ramones and move on to other figures from the golden age of punk. You can't go wrong for $11 each. (aggronautix.com)

Drummer T-Shirts
If you don't count all those accordion lessons I took as a kid, my instrument is the drums.

A site called Drumbum offers all kinds of gifts for drummers and other musicians. I'm hoping for the More Cowbell T-shirt. And just $20, too. (store.drumbum.com)

Pod Power
If you're into music, chances are you have all kinds of electronic gear with those this bulky power bricks that are tough to plug into standard power strips. Why did it take so long to invent something as simple and as useful as this? For $35, I'll take half a dozen. (quirky.com)

ALAN IS THE HOST OF THE RADIO SHOW THE SECRET HISTORY OF ROCK. REACH HIM AT ALAN@ALANCROSS.CA

▶ Giant Boombox Dock for iPod/iPhone

HANDOUT

▶ Black Box Revelation will finally see a proper album release in North America.

Humble beginnings

Black Box Revelation is finding that their hard work is starting to pay off ▶ With their label finally behind them, find out how they are doing it

LINDA LABAN
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA
METRO WORLD NEWS IN BOSTON

If all goes to plan, by the end of this month, Black Box Revelation will have a bona fide album released in North America.

In the meantime, the pair's Shiver of Joy EP is out on all formats, including limited-edition coloured vinyl; just in time for them to capitalize on it during their tour with Beady Eye.

"It's cool to have our music out here in the States and in our hands. I like it when you can open it up and see what's inside. Like Christmas presents, no?" vocalist and guitarist Jan Paternoster says.

"It shows that the label is enthusiastic. They had the idea to press green and yellow."

"It's cool to have our music out here in the States and in our hands. I like it when you can open it up and see what's inside. Like Christmas presents, no? It shows that the label is enthusiastic. They had the idea to press green and yellow."
JAN PATERNOSTER

The Belgian garage rock duo's 2007 debut, Set Your Head On Fire, fell foul to label troubles and last year's Silver Threads was only issued online and to iTunes.

"Getting your music on iTunes, it's not that hard to do," Paternoster says.

Shiver of Joy collects old and new songs from the forthcoming My Perception LP and reveals strong American roots: Ramonesy rawness, early Strokes sultriness and, on the beautiful rambling closing epic Sealed With Thorns, a hint of the group Television.

"We've been playing for five years now; we've got more experience. Because of that, we started improvising more, especially in that song. You hear it in the end. We just kept on playing and playing and didn't care how long a song is supposed to be. It was about a great moment."

Paternoster

Black Box Revelation spent most of 2011 recording and touring in the U.S.

▶ **Paternoster quote:** "We recorded the new album in Los Angeles with Alain Johannes," Paternoster says, referring to the producer. "We had a really amazing time with him, playing music and recording when we felt like it. Sealed With Thorns was recorded there. For us, it's more important to catch the moment and get a good vibe in the song."

Who says there's nothing good on TV?

Star-packed series from Debra Messing, Don Cheadle and Kiefer Sutherland heat TV's winter lineup ▶ And Charlie Sheen set to return to the small screen

The new year promises a wave of returning TV favourites and buzzy rookie series, with most of the big U.S. networks expected to roll out ambitious, star-packed fare that includes a comedy with Don Cheadle and Kristen Bell, a slick musical drama from Debra Messing and Anjelica Huston, a new thriller starring Kiefer Sutherland and the return of bad boy Charlie Sheen.

The big broadcasters typically unleash their hottest shows in the fall but they've saved a lot of sizzle for the colder months of the year, says Barbara Williams, Shaw Media's senior vice president of content who oversees programming for channels including Global, Showcase and History Television.

"Right across the board you're seeing very big, powerful series coming in the midseason."

"You can't expect viewers to just be there with you in the fall and then hang in through repeats and stuff and then be back with you again in the fall. Our viewers are more demanding that that."

Big titles across the dial include the Cheadle-led ensemble comedy House of Lies, a Showtime series bound for Canada's Movie Central/The Movie Network on Jan. 9.

And speculation is high on whether Lost mastermind J.J. Abrams can strike TV gold again with his upcoming time-travelling mind-bender, Alcatraz.

Comparisons to his island-bound hit are inevitable, with Lost star Jorge Garcia and Lost writer Elizabeth Sarnoff also on board the new project. The sprawling Vancouver-shot mystery debuts Jan. 16 on Citytv and Fox with a two-hour premiere that sets up an eerie premise: an Alcatraz prisoner who died 30 years ago suddenly reappears, youthful as ever.

Meanwhile, Messing stars in NBC's Broadway serial Smash, also airing on CTV, but this is no happy-go-lucky Glee-inspired crowd-pleaser.

The mature drama centres on a songwriting duo who attempt to mount a Marilyn Monroe musical while wrestling with marital woes.

Canuck wives

On the reality front, Slice's The Real Housewives of Vancouver will rival the drama of its U.S. counterparts, says Shaw Media executive Barbara Williams.

▶ **West coast divas?** "A lot of people were kind of wondering if Canada has those kinds of housewives," says Williams. "It lives up to the brand, I would say. Who knew?"

An A-list cast includes Huston, Broadway stars Brian d'Arcy James, Megan Hilty and Christian Borle and American Idol near-winner Katharine McPhee as a young ingenue.

Meanwhile, Sheen returns to CTV with the FX show Anger Management, based on the hit film of the same name. No air date has been set in Canada but FX has said they expect to make a U.S. debut in the summer.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

HELEN SLOAN/HBO-THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/THE CANADIAN PRESS/

▶ Jason Momoa portrays Khal Drogo in a scene from Game of Thrones. The show returns to HBO Canada next year.

JAE HONG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Mad Men is also back on TV in 2012. Pictured is cast member Christina Hendricks.

MITCHELL HAASETH/NBC UNIVERSAL-THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ The gang from 30 Rock will be back in the new year: Alec Baldwin as Jack Donaghy, left, Tina Fey as Liz Lemon and Tracy Morgan as Tracy Jordan.

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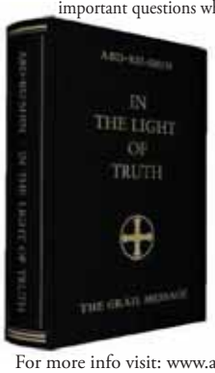

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Eastwood doing reality TV? Please say it ain't so

Actor's family set to star in show produced by makers of Kardashian series

THE WORD

DOROTHY ROBINSON
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA

The news that Clint Eastwood and his family are making a reality TV show is making me feel all Dirty Harry on the inside.

Yes, TMZ.com is reporting that Eastwood's wife and two daughters are shooting a new reality show that will explore what it's like to be "Hollywood royalty" for the E! Network (editor's note: All reality TV shows are about this. Change it up, people).

Per TMZ, it will focus on the relationship between Clint's wife Dina Eastwood, their daughter Morgan and Clint's 18-year-old daughter Francesca. It is being produced by the same company that is also responsible for the Kardashian shows.

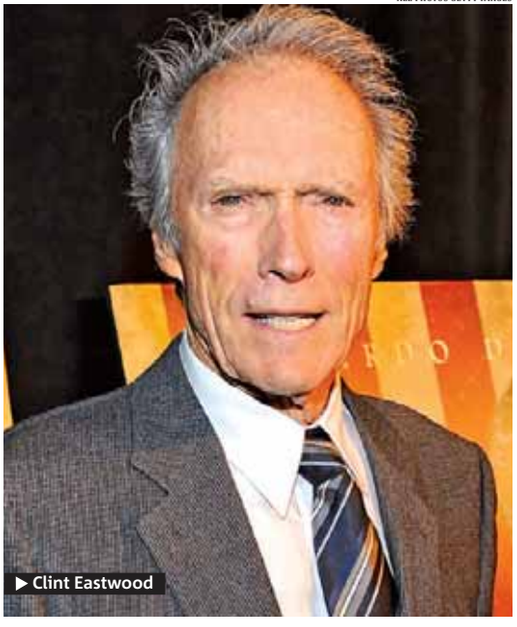
Honestly, folks, let's just give up.

Because if Clint, 81, succumbs to the siren call of reality TV, there is no hope for the rest of it.

It's because he and his family are "Hollywood royalty" that they don't have to sink to this, even if the focus is going to be on Francesca, an aspiring actress (second note: If your dad is Clint Eastwood and you need to have a reality TV show to gain traction, you must be a terrible actress).

Come on, Clint. You starred in Gran Torino — please don't go down without a fight.

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES



▶ Clint Eastwood

Celebrity tweets

@SteveMartinToGo

Trivia: In the Jerk, after we sing "Tonight, You Belong to Me," when I stand up you can hear a crack as I step on the ukulele.

@BettyBuckley

My absolutely "nothing" day! Ahhhh. But maybe I'll start the Michael Connelly book. I am so excited about all the new movies comin' out!

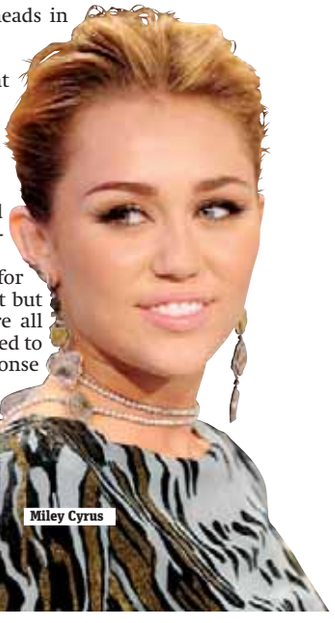
@pennjillette

I don't ever touch my hair unless I'm going on stage. I don't look in mirrors. This is the way I look. I'll try to remember to smile

@SethMacFarlane

I wonder what President the corporations are gonna buy us next year!

Miley says her twins are real



Miley Cyrus

After turning heads in a low-cut dress at CNN's recent Heroes gala, Miley Cyrus is fighting back against speculation that she's had breast augmentation surgery.

"Thank you for the compliment but these babies are all mine," she posted to Twitter in response to the claims.

"I wish they'd realize you don't have to be fake to be beautiful."

METRO

Suri Cruise rakes it in for Christmas

▶ Suri Cruise

Suri Cruise doesn't skimp when it comes to asking for things from Santa.

Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes' daughter reportedly has a Christmas list of items that total $130,000, according to In Touch Weekly.

Topping the 5-year-old's list are a pony, diamond earrings and gowns that will make her look "like a fairy princess," according to the magazine.

And Cruise has reportedly already found a stable in Beverly Hills for the pony.

"Tom and Katie love the holidays and always go overboard," a source says.

"Suri is very mature and knows what she wants."

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3 life

Sufganiyot tips

- Be patient and give the yeast dough plenty of time to rise, wrapped in plastic in the refrigerator.
- If you want to be really traditional, use extra-virgin olive oil for frying.
- Use a frying thermometer to monitor the oil temperature. Cool oil will give you greasy results.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Scan this code for a Hanukkah recipe for coffee and porter braised brisket.

Put wine love into words

PETER ROCKWELL
LIQUIDASSETS@EASTLINK.CA
TWITTER: @THEREALWINEGUY

When I was a young wine expert in training, there was no Internet. If you wanted to learn anything about anything, you had to look it up in a book.

Back in the day there wasn't a wine scribe more famous than Hugh Johnson — a gregarious Brit with a casual way of delivery on vino that paved the way for today's first person blogger culture.

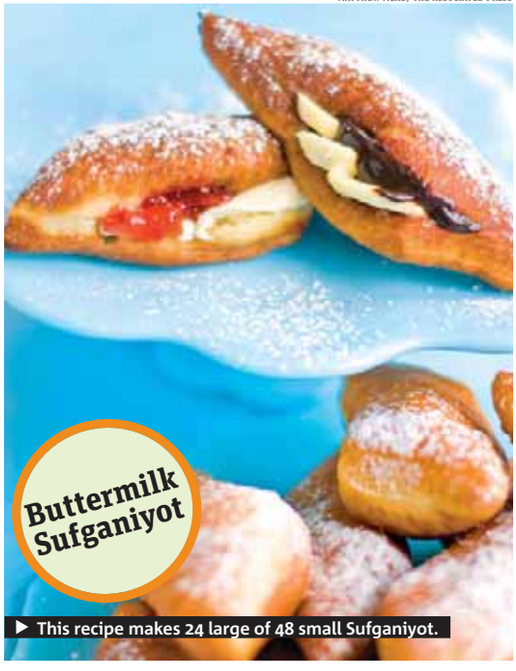
Johnson is still writing up a storm with his Pocket Wine Book 2012 (Mitchell Beazley, $16.99), the undisputed bible for any wine lover on the go. Ever the literary entrepreneur, this year he's created a Wine Journal (Mitchell Beazley, $17.99) that will allow vinophiles to write their own reviews and keep track of what they're putting in their mouths.

The journal would make a great Christmas gift, especially when paired with a wine worth writing about. France's Père Anselme La Fiole du Pape Châteauneuf-du-Pape ($35.49 - $39.50) is a non-vintage blend of up to 13 grapes with a rustic, dark fruited personality perfect for holiday drinking. PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS CANADA. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.

Get sweet on Hanukkah

Bake up some delicious treats inspired by the upcoming Jewish holiday

MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



This recipe makes 24 large of 48 small Sufganiyot.

Preparation:

1. In medium bowl, whisk flour, baking soda and salt. Set aside. In small saucepan over medium, heat milk until steaming. Remove pan from heat and add buttermilk. Pour mix into bowl of stand mixer fitted with dough hook. Whisk in yeast and sugar. Let stand 5 mins.
2. Coat large bowl with vegetable oil; set aside.
3. Add flour mix to milk mix and mix on low until dry ingredients are moistened and form ball, about 3 mins. Increase speed to medium and continue mixing 2 mins. Dough will be quite sticky. Transfer dough to prepared bowl, cover with plastic wrap and set aside in a draft-free spot. Let rise until doubled in size, about 1 hour.
4. Fill deep sauté pan with 7.5 cm (3 inches) of oil. Heat over medium to 190 C (375 F). Line large plate with paper towels.
5. Lightly flour clean work surface. Turn dough out onto surface. Dust top of dough with flour, press to flatten. Fold dough in half and tuck ends under to create a ball. Dust with flour again and use rolling pin to roll dough into roughly a 28-by-43-cm (11-by-17-inch) rectangle about 5 mm (1/4 inch) thick.
6. Using sharp knife, cut dough lengthwise into 4 equal strips, then cut horizontally, at angle, to create 24 or 48 diamond-shaped pieces.
7. Working in batches, carefully drop pieces of dough into hot oil, being careful not to crowd pan. Fry, turning often with slotted spoon, until puffed and golden, 2 mins. Transfer to plate to drain while frying remaining Sufganiyot. Fill or top as desired. Serve warm, dusted with powdered sugar.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients:

- 1 l plus 50 ml (4 1/4 cups) bread flour, plus more for dusting work surface
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) baking soda
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) salt
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) milk
- 300 ml (1 1/4 cups) buttermilk
- 20 ml (4 tsp) dry active yeast
- 45 ml (3 tbsp) sugar
- Vegetable oil, for frying
- Powdered sugar, for dusting

Fillings

To fill the Sufganiyot, use either a syringe-like pastry filling tool or slice open one side with a paring knife and use a spoon.

- A few slices of fresh banana and a generous spoonful of hot fudge.
- Ricotta cheese mixed with chopped walnuts, golden raisins and a drizzle of honey.
- Cream cheese topped with some chunky strawberry jam.
- A chocolate-nut spread (such as Nutella), topped with chopped peanuts and marshmallow spread.

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gift guide

Top tech toys

MIKE YAWNEY
FOR METRO

Still looking for that special something for that gadget lover in your life? There are so many gadgets and so little time before Christmas! Let us help you weed out the good from the bad with this list of must-have tech toys sure to please that nerd in your life.

Motorola Razr — $649 (no contract); $149 (three-year contract)
Now here's a blast from the past! Motorola has revived the Razr! The handset debuted back in 2004, now, seven years later, the brand finds new life. This ultra-thin, water- and scratch-resistant smartphone is blazing fast thanks to its 1.2GHz dual-core processor. The updated handset features a 4.3-inch Super AMOLED screen, 8-megapixel camera capable of shooting 1080p HD video, as well as a front camera. One of the standout features has to be MotoCast, which lets you stream your documents and media files from your home or work computer. Easily one of the best Android phones of 2011.

Kobo Vox — $199
Kobo is best known for its eReaders, but the company has now expanded into the tablet market. The affordable Kobo Vox is a colour eReader, which doubles as an entry-level Android tablet. Read books, surf the web, send email or download one of more than 15,000 apps. The Kobo Vox is not as fast as some of the top-selling tablets on the market, but makes a great gift for someone who wants an easy-to-use device.

Clockwise, from top: Motorola Razr, $649 (no contract), $149 (three-year contract); Nike+ SportsWatch GPS, $199; Kobo Vox, $199; and Crayola ColorStudio HD, $29.99.

TDK Boombox — $399
The '80s are making a comeback! TDK, the company best known for blank cassette tapes, is bringing the boombox back. This high-end audio system is made from quality materials including glass and aluminum. Two powerful six-inch coaxial drivers deliver clear vocals and crisp highs while a six-inch subwoofer provides superior bass. Supports most audio devices, even instruments!

ION iCade — $99.99
Turn your iPad into an authentic arcade cabinet. Made from wood, this cabinet features buttons and a joystick to ensure you get the nostalgic feeling of stepping into an arcade. No quarters needed! The iCade is compatible with more than 100 classic Atari games such as Asteroids, Centipede, and Battlezone (each sold separately)

Viper SmartStart — starting at $349 (price depends on vehicle)
Tired of getting into a cold vehicle? Why not use your smartphone to start your vehicle so it's toasty warm when you climb in. Viper's SmartStart system works off your cell signal so you can start your vehicle from practically anywhere you get reception.

ION iCade, $99.99, left, Viper SmartStart, starting at $349 (price depends on vehicle), below.

Nike+ SportsWatch GPS — $199
Need encouragement to get in shape? This watch may just be what you are looking for! Nike has teamed up with TomTom to design the perfect GPS watch to track time, pace, distance, calories burned, and heart rate while running. Wear it while running or use it as an everyday watch.

Darth Vader Toaster — $49.99
Enjoy your toast on the dark side? This dual-slotted toaster is for you. This officially licensed toaster will help you leave the mark of Vader's helmet on every piece of bread in your home on Christmas morning. Optional temperature settings ensure each slice is toasted to perfection.

Parrot AR.Drone Quadricopter — $329
Boys love their toys and here's one that will keep them entertained for hours. Parrot's AR.Drone is like a helicopter, only with four sets of spinning blades. The Drone is controlled through your iPhone and iPad. What really sets this gadget apart from other flying toys are the two cameras mounted on the device to give you a bird's-eye view from the air on your phone. Make sure you buy an extra battery since one charge will only give you about 10 minutes of flight!

Crayola ColorStudio HD — $29.99
Turn your iPad into a colouring book. Download the special app, select your colour, tip shape and then draw on your iPad with the digital iMarker. It feels just like a real Crayola marker! Download new pages, background music and sound effects. It's like having a never-ending colouring book!

Darth Vader Toaster, $49.99, top, TDK Boombox, $399, left,

9 shopping days left

PRE-BOXING WEEK
BONANZA
$20/ month Unlimited BlackBerry® plan included
unlimited data, BlackBerry® Internet Service, talk & text
Offer Ending Soon
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mobilicity™
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Pretty woman

Ten top-to-toe gifts for her

JANINE FALCON
FOR METRO

The KeratinPerfect Perfect Treatment Smoothing Duo safely tames stubborn, wayward hair into a smooth, swingy, glossy finish at home. $65, Sephora.

Mineral-rich **Boscia Luminizing Black Mask** purifies skin as it softens, brightens and energizes. Plus, it looks wicked cool on the face — cuz, yep, it's black. $41 at Sephora.

Outfitted in a sweet tweed case, the **Dior Deluxe Holiday Palette** features a smoky-eyes duo and nude lip shade, nude-eyes duo and red lip shade, plus lip balm, powder and mascara. $90, The Bay.

Did someone say stress? Not us, at least not after time spent with the eucalyptus and spearmint **Bath & Body Works Stress Relief Set**, which includes body wash and foam bath, body lotion, a candle and massage oil. $49.50, bathandbodyworks.com.

Die-hard DIY manicure fans can get in on the no-chip, soak-off gel mani action with the **Nailene Professional UV Gel System**. With practice, it delivers salon-comparable results. From $9.99 to $79.99, Shoppers Drug Mart.

With hands so much in the beauty spotlight, this **Crabtree & Evelyn Hand Therapy Kit** with **La Source Hand Recovery, Hand Therapy, Nail & Cuticle Cream** and a nail buffer, is a must-give. $35, crabtree-evelyn.com for stores.

Iconic fragrance L'Air du Temps has a heritage that dates back to 1948. This year's **Nina Ricci L'Air**, an airy, romantic floral, is the scent's youthful spin-off — the pair makes a lovely mother-daughter gift. From $80, The Bay.

This luxurious, perfumed **Guerlain Vol de Nuit Powder Spray** is irresistibly iridescent with shimmering pale pink and hints of silver and blue-green sparkle. $100, Guerlain counters.

A soothing, fragrant blend of natural calendula, grapeseed, arnica, sandalwood and neroli oils, **Tata Harper Revitalizing Body Oil** beautifully conditions skin without leaving it slick. $90, Gee Beauty, 416-486-0080.

The **Airplus Spa Value Set** is stocked with excellent foot care formulas plus a full-size pair of cosy, cloud-soft, aloe-infused socks — hugs for hardworking feet after a long day. $12.99, Shoppers Drug Mart, Zellers Pharmacy.

Clockwise from top: Bath & Body Works Stress Relief Set; Guerlain Vol de Nuit Powder Spray; Nailene Professional UV Gel System; Crabtree & Evelyn Hand Therapy Kit with La Source Hand Recovery, Hand Therapy, Nail & Cuticle Cream; Dior Deluxe Holiday Palette; Airplus Spa Value Set; Nina Ricci L'Air; Tata Harper Revitalizing Body Oil; Boscia Luminizing Black Mask.

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COMSTOCK/THINKSTOCK

LET YOUR FINGERS DO THE SHOPPING

ONLINE SHOPPING

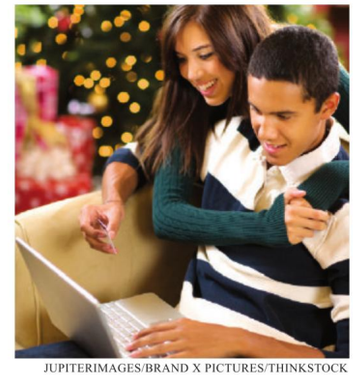
You have to admit it, there's something pretty appealing about being able to do your Christmas shopping from the comfort of your own home. No need to circle around mall parking lots looking for elusive parking spaces, no need to wrestle with awkward packages and, of course, no need to even change out of your pyjamas.

From research and comparison shopping to purchase and delivery, many people are discovering that online is the way to shop. The Internet offers almost endless ideas for finding the perfect gift for everyone on your shopping list. If you are thinking about doing some of your Christmas online this year, here are some pointers to help make the experience an efficient and enjoyable one.

OBTAIN A CREDIT CARD FOR ONLINE PURCHASES Scotiabank has a suite of Momentum Visa Cards that offer cash-back rewards from 1 per cent to 4 per cent. To help decide which card is right for you, try the Momentum Cash Back Calculator at scotiabank.com/momentumcashback.

BE THE FIRST TO KNOW about shipping specials and other discounts by signing up for e-mail discounts from your favourite shops.

BOOKMARK SITES designed for Canadian shoppers. Canada Post Comparison Shopper (canadapost.ca/shopper), for example, analyzes products and deals from hundreds of stores in Canada and the U.S. Another site, Canada Shopping Links (canadashoppinglinks.com) guides you to Canada's Internet retailers.



JUPITERIMAGES/BRAND X PICTURES/THINKSTOCK

DETAILS When you're considering a purchase, pay attention to any terms and conditions, warranties, shipping facts and other important details.

REVIEW THE VENDOR'S RETURN POLICY Even the savviest of shoppers can end up with clothing that doesn't fit, is the wrong colour or wasn't quite what he or she expected.

With Dec. 25 fast approaching, make sure you also factor in delivery time. Some sites offer express shipping, but it's best to get your shopping done sooner than later to ensure that your special gift makes it under the tree in time for Christmas!

STOCKBYTE/THINKSTOCK

FIVE TIPS FOR WRAPPING UP CHRISTMAS

Say so long to Christmas-Eve chaos this year by wrapping holiday gifts well before Christmas. Here are a few tips to make the job easy and enjoyable.

SET UP A DESIGNATED WRAPPING AREA and ensure you have all the gift-wrapping essentials before you start. These include scissors, tape, gift tags, paper and ribbon. ***Tip:*** Double-sided tape stays put and out of sight.

USE CLEAR OR PRINTED CELLOPHANE BAGS to wrap beauty products, candies, or baked goods. Seal the bag with ribbon or raffia and add some seasonal stickers to finish the job.

PICK UP PAPER GIFT BAGS AT YOUR LOCAL DOLLAR STORE Bags are affordable and available in a variety of sizes and patterns.

PURCHASE A GLUE GUN AT THE CRAFT STORE Glue guns are fun and easy to use and can transform an ordinary gift into a masterpiece.

CUSTOMIZE YOUR GIFT with seasonal greenery, pine cones, or artificial flower sprigs.

TOP 10 SONGS OF THE SEASON

When it comes to choosing the top 10 Christmas songs of all time, where do you start? Over the years, the airwaves have treated us to a variety of classics sung by everyone from Bing Crosby and Nat "King" Cole to Band Aid and Mariah Carey.

ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF COMPOSERS, AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS (ASCAP), THE TOP 10 ARE:

1. The Christmas Song (Nat "King" Cole)
2. Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas (The Pretenders)
3. Winter Wonderland (Eurythmics)
4. Santa Claus Is Coming To Town (Bruce Springsteen)
5. White Christmas (Bing Crosby)
6. Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow! (Andy Williams)
7. Jingle Bell Rock (Bobby Helms)
8. Little Drummer Boy (The Harry Simeone Chorale & Orchestra)
9. Sleigh Ride (The Ronettes)
10. Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer (Gene Autry)

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You're richer than you think.® Scotiabank®

Hey handsome

Great grooming gifts for the man in your life

JANINE FALCON
FOR METRO

Kerastase Homme Capital Force Daily Treatment Shampoo Anti-Oiliness Effect cleanses oil-prone hair without stripping it dry, and leaves scalp feeling comfortable, too. $35, kerastase.com for salons.

L'Occitane Verdon Fresh Water Shower Body & Hair two-in-one wash saves time as it wakes him up with its waterfall-fresh scent. $18, loccitane.com.

New **Gillette Fusion ProGlide Irritation 5 Defense Shave Gel** foams up to a rich beard-softening lather, and is souped up with glide-enhancing lubricants for a gentle, yet close shave. $7.49 at drugstores and mass retailers.

Biotherm Homme Aquapower D-Sensitive Soothing & Fortifying After Shave Moisturizer is fragrance- and alcohol-free, and enriched with Biotherm's signature Pure Thermal Plankton Extract plus calcium. $30, biothermhomme.ca.

Kiehl's Facial Fuel Transformer Age Correcting Moisture Gel for Men nudges the clock back on fine lines, uneven skin tone and pesky large pores with a light, quick-absorb formula. $35, kiehls.ca.

All-natural Consonant Body Antioxidant Superhero Serum doses skin with vitamins, minerals, and mattifying marine clay. **Ultra Moisturizing Organic Face Cream moisturizes** intensely without an oily finish. $63 and $54 respectively, consonantbody.com.

Talc-free Jack Black Performance Remedy Dry Down Friction-Free Powder is a cornstarch, cucumber and green tea mix that absorbs moisture and reduces chafing to make workouts more comfortable. $24, Sephora.

With notes of spearmint, peppermint, citrus and vetiver, **Giorgio Armani Code Sport** is a crisp, energetic scent with a distinctive underlying sensuality. $75, drug and department stores.

Men are funny about hand and body creams (that's not code), but **The Body Shop Hemp Hand Protector and Hemp Body Butter** consistently seems to meet with their approval. That's a win-win. $10 and $18, respectively, thebodyshop.ca.

Best man-bribe? A massage, especially with **Weleda Arnica Massage Oil**, which will help warm and relax sore, tired muscles. Plus it will put him in a receptive mood so you can tell him a massage is an excellent bribe for you, too. $24, well.ca, Rexall Pharma Plus, Whole Foods.

Gillette Fusion ProGlide Irritation 5 Defense Shave Gel, left, The Body Shop Hemp Hand Protector and Hemp Body Butter, below, and All-Natural Consonant Ultra Moisturizing Organic Face Cream for Dry Skin and Body Antioxidant Superhero Serum.

From left: Weleda Arnica Massage Oil; Talc-free Jack Black Performance Remedy Dry Down Friction-Free Powder; Biotherm Homme Aquapower D-Sensitive Soothing & Fortifying After Shave Moisturizer; Giorgio Armani Code Sport; Kerastase Homme Capital Force Daily Treatment Shampoo Anti-Oiliness Effect; L'Occitane Verdon Fresh Water Shower Body & Hair; Kiehl's Facial Fuel Transformer Age Correcting Moisture Gel for Men.

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❄ When trying to find a gift for service providers in your life, Charles the Butler advises to make a list of everyone you wish to give a present.

How to give gifts to service providers

CHARLES THE BUTLER

ASKCHARLESTHEBUTLER@METRONEWS.CA
FOR MORE, VISIT CHARLESMACPHERSON.COM

The holiday season is supposed to be one of family fun and relaxation; however, sometimes the obligations of the season create unneeded stress.

So how do we deal with the stress of gift giving to service providers?

Firstly, the types of service providers you may wish to thank are the dog walker, newspaper delivery person and mail carrier, just to name a few.

There are two methods for dealing with this.

My favourite is to pick a theme. For example, everyone who works outside gets the same thing, such as a gift card from Tim Hortons or a new scarf and glove set.

This is always a welcome treat since they can warm up the winter with a hot drink or with their new scarf and gloves.

But what to do if you have people at different levels of what is appropriate to give? For example, what do you give a dog walker versus your math tutor?

1 First, I like to write a list of everyone I wish to give a present.

2 Try to come up with two or three categories, such as small, medium and big, and assign a dollar value to each category.

3 Next, place everyone from your list into one of the three categories. Now you have your list and everyone is easily classified.

So what's next? Pick the presents for each category — small presents are $5 bars of special soap, the medium category is $20 bottles of wine and, finally, the big category for only a few people may be chipping in with your brothers and sisters to buy your parents a new TV.

These are the techniques that we as butlers use to help keep the household organized so we can deal with all of the gift giving that may be required.

And it's an easy formula, whether you have to give five, 10 or more presents this holiday season.

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THE BLACKBERRY: LOVE IT!

Did you know that Lady Gaga has a BlackBerry? In a picture posted on celebrityblackberrysightings.com, she holds it tightly in her hand as she poses for cameras. The website keeps a running tab on celebrities who have been spotted sporting a BlackBerry. There are also pictures of Brad Pitt with his BlackBerry Torch, Jay-Z holding onto a sleek-looking white BlackBerry Bold, and many others.

But you don't have to be famous to have a BlackBerry. All told, there are 70 million BlackBerry subscribers in 91 countries around the world! In Canada, a wide selection of BlackBerry phones is available on Mobilicity's unlimited network.

The BlackBerry is famous in its own right. The operating system was developed by Research in Motion (RIM), and every BlackBerry smartphone is an all-in-one mobile phone, email device, web browser and organizer with an intuitive menu system, QWERTY keyboard and easy-to-read display. There are multimedia functions too, for music, videos and photos.

Here's a list of the stand-out features people love about their BlackBerry.

EMAIL

You can't beat the speed of BlackBerry's email. That's because the BlackBerry user is in an "always on" environment. Let's say you have a BlackBerry Torch 9810. When mail is sent to you, it is picked up immediately and pushed to your BlackBerry where it appears instantly. You can access mail without having to open any special programs or even the BlackBerry browser. And with Mobilicity's affordable unlimited data options, users can access email as much as they want without being concerned about a huge bill.

INSTANT MESSAGING

The acclaimed BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) gives BlackBerry users a quick, easy way to send instant messages to each other when connected to a wireless network like Mobilicity's. It's a free app that comes with BlackBerry Internet Service (currently 50 percent off at Mobilicity), and unlike email, lets you carry on several conversations at the same time. Another great thing about BBM is that it shows you when your messages are delivered (D) and read (R). BlackBerry smartphones support other instant messaging applications too, including MSN Messenger, Yahoo Messenger, Skype and AIM.

SMOOTH OPERATOR

All of the applications included in the BlackBerry operating system are seamlessly integrated with one another for a convenient and smooth user experience. For example, if you receive an email from one friend that contains a phone number, all you have to do is click on it from within the email application and voila, the number gets dialed. Likewise, you can take a picture on your BlackBerry Curve 9380 and send it to a friend via email from within the camera application.

CHOICE

There is a wide selection of BlackBerry smartphones for consumers to choose from – from the basic BlackBerry Curve 9360 to the ultra-sophisticated BlackBerry Bold 9900 and BlackBerry Torch 9810. You can personalize any of these devices with your favourite ringtones, wallpapers, themes, games and a growing number of software applications and accessories, available from the BlackBerry App Store. Price-wise, there's lots of choice as well. Mobilicity's BlackBerry smartphones range from the affordable Curve phones (Mobilicity has the 9360 and 9380 each priced at $299.99, and starting today the 3G is on sale for $129.99), to the more premium BlackBerry Torch 9810 priced at $499.99 and the BlackBerry Bold 9900 priced at $549.99.

For a limited time, Mobilicity is offering the Unlimited BlackBerry plan for only $20. The plan includes unlimited data, BlackBerry Internet Service, Talk and Text – that's 50 per cent off the regular price!

FIVE BLACKBERRY SMARTPHONES TO LOVE

BLACKBERRY CURVE 3G

Connect with your friends and colleagues with the BlackBerry Curve 3G. With wireless networking, it has an optical trackpad, full QWERTY keyboard and 2.0 MP camera and video recording. It also has built-in GPS, BlackBerry Maps, and Social Networking. Regular price $299.99 at Mobilicity; sale price $129.99 while supplies last.

BLACKBERRY CURVE 9360

While it looks and feels like a lightweight (at 99 g and just 11 mm thick), the all-new Curve 9360 is anything but. It has a 5 Megapixel camera with flash, and a fast BlackBerry Browser with seamless panning and zooming, great web-based video and gaming. You'll enjoy fluid animation and stunning graphics too. Regular price $299.99 at Mobilicity.

BLACKBERRY CURVE 9380

For fun and easy socializing, the all-new Curve 9380 has a 3.2-inch full touchscreen with optical trackpad for great navigation. This smartphone also has a 5.0 Megapixel camera with video recording capabilities. Regular price $299.99 at Mobilicity.

BLACKBERRY TORCH 9810

The all-new BlackBerry Torch 9810 has a full-touch 3.2-inch display, sliding QWERTY keyboard and, BlackBerry 7 OS with Liquid Graphics and the latest multimedia features such as HD video. It also features a speedy 1.2 GHz processor and 5.0 Megapixel camera with flash. Regular price $499.99 at Mobilicity.

BLACKBERRY BOLD 9900

The ultra thin and super powerful sleek BlackBerry Bold 9900 combines a 2.8-inch touchscreen and large QWERTY keyboard, ideal for larger fingers and fast texting. Built on BlackBerry 7, it features a fast 1.2GHz processor for fast loading, scrolling and zooming. It also has an HD video camera, Wi-Fi connectivity, GPS Navigation, and 8 GB on-board memory. Regular price $549.99 at Mobilicity.

GREAT BLACKBERRY APPS

BLACKBERRY USERS CAN ENJOY USING A VAST NUMBER OF APPS. MANY APPS ARE FREE, SOME YOU WILL HAVE TO PAY FOR. BUT ONCE YOU'VE MADE YOUR SELECTION, YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THEM ANYTIME WITH MOBILICITY'S UNLIMITED DATA ACCESS.

FACEBOOK 2.0 FOR BLACKBERRY

GasBuddy Facebook works with your BlackBerry smartphone to help you stay connected with friends. A single notifications bar at the top of the screen handles friend requests, messages, chats, and general notifications. You'll get messages and updates, see everyone's latest profile pix and be able to accept friend requests – as they arrive. ***Free***

CANADIAN WEATHER

Is it going to snow today? Use the Canadian Weather app to find out. It uses the Environment Canada data feed for current conditions, a 7-day forecast and detailed forecast all in one screen! You can display satellite weather maps for North America and Canada too. ***Free***

IM+

This mobile chat application allows you to keep up with messages and information in Facebook, Skype, Yahoo, MSM and more. Invite your friends to a group chat and enjoy! You can also integrate it to your BlackBerry inbox and send files, photos and voicemails. ***Free***

AP MOBILE

For news junkies on the go, AP Mobile brings you up-to-the-minute local, national and international news. The latest version called AP Mobile World Edition, also offers push alerts, improved navigation, and support for multiple languages as well as BlackBerry OS 7-enhanced video experiences. ***Free***

GOOGLE MAPS

Leaving the house? Be sure to have the Google Maps application on your BlackBerry. It lets you see locations nearby, use voice search, traffic, street view and even different map layers and views. The most recent version lets you filter searches by star rating or distance. ***Free***

PHOTO STUDIO

Turn your BlackBerry smartphone into a photo editing studio with the Photo Studio for BlackBerry app. With simple but powerful image processing, you can resize, rotate and crop your photos. There are also 70 unique effects. Then, add a frame and share your photo. ***Free***

SHAZAM ENCORE

Want to know the name of a song that's playing on the radio? Hold your BlackBerry up to it and Shazam will figure out what it is. It will also give you different options including the ability to buy the track. You can share 'tags', read reviews of songs, watch YouTube videos, view lyrics and more! ***Compliments of BlackBerry for a limited time***

ONE TOUCH FLASHLIGHT

This flashlight app comes with a one touch on/off icon and claims to be the brightest flashlight for when you're looking for keys you've dropped on the ground at night... or anytime! It uses BlackBerry video light not the low-light LED screen light so it delivers more light more quickly. No wonder *Fortune Magazine* rated this popular app one of the best! ***Free***

KINDLE FOR BLACKBERRY

Now you can read Kindle books on your smartphone. Download the latest bestseller at home and conveniently catch up on your reading during the train ride home on your BlackBerry. ***Free***

SLACKER RADIO

If music makes your world go around, this is a great app for your BlackBerry smartphone. Slacker Radio is great for streaming music. You can tune into over 100 radio stations or create your own custom station from millions of songs. On-demand access requires a Slacker Premium Radio Subscription. ***Free***

APP CONTEST ON FACEBOOK

Submit your favourite app for a chance to win a Mobilicity Swag Bag!

All you have to do is "Like" the Mobilicity Facebook page. Then, submit your favourite app and tell us why you love it.

Toy story

LeapPad Explorer, $109.99, available at Leap Frog, shop.leapfrog.com/leapfrog.

Gross-Abulary Game, $24.95, ages six and up, available at Mastermind Toys, mastermindtoys.com.

Lazer Stunt Chaser car with built-in rechargeable battery, wireless infrared remote control, stunt ramp, battery charger and instruction guide. Ages four and up, $44.99, available at major toy retailers.

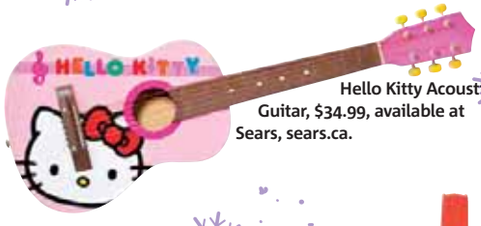
Classic Red 12-inch Wheel Cruiser, $139.95, available at Indigo, chapters.indigo.ca.

Alex Toys All Ducted Out Duct Tape Craft Kit, $24.99, ages six and up, available at Mastermind Toys, mastermindtoys.com.

Teacup Piggie, $19.99, available at most major retail outlets across the country, rptoys.ca.

Angry Birds 8-inch Red Bird Plush Toy with Sound, $15.99, available at Future Shop, futureshop.ca.

Songs Just For Me Personalized CD, $19.99, available at Just For Me, justforme.com.



Hello Kitty Acoustic Guitar, $34.99, available at Sears, sears.ca.

Monster High Dead Tired Doll Assortment, $15.99, available at Mattel, mattel.com.

Air Hogs Hyperactives Pro R/C Vehicle, $59.99, available at major toy retailers, airhogs.com.

Smart Labs Weird and Wacky Contraption Lab, $49.95, ages eight and up, available at Mastermind Toys, mastermindtoys.com.

Leap Frog My Discovery House, $19.99, available at Leap Frog, shop.leapfrog.com/leapfrog.

WinYourGifts.ca

Every day, from every Winners and HomeSense store, one lucky shopper could win back the value of their holiday purchase*. December 1 to 24.

*(c) 2011 Winners. No Purchase Necessary. Dec 1/11- Dec 24/11. Internet access required. 6,504 prizes available to be won at the start of the contest (1 prize per store per day). Prize is cash or gift card in the amount of winning purchase from Winners/HomeSense ($500 max). Odds depend on number of entries received per store per day. Skill test required. For Official Contest Rules (including no purchase information) see www.winyourgifts.ca

Wine

PETER ROCKWELL
LIQUIDASSETS@EASTLINK.CA
TWITTER: @THEREALWINEGUY

Whether you are serving turkey, ham, lamb or beef this holiday season, odds are you will be washing it down with a glass or two of vino. Finding wines that will appeal to a crowd and match with your spread can be challenging.

These picks will make nice with the big bird and just about anything else you might consider serving.

Freixenet NV Cordon Rosado ($12.95-$15.99)
▶ This ripe, rounded, food-friendly rosé sparkler from Spain is my favourite big meal intro and proves that bubbly ain't just for New Year's Eve anymore.

Moselland 2010 ArsVitis Riesling ($9.95-$17.99)
▶ It's hard to beat the soft, massaging flavours of a German riesling when it meets a mouthful of a complex meal. This off-dry version works wonders with both turkey and ham.

Caymus 2009 Conundrum ($23.95-$29.99)
▶ This insanely innovative white California mix of more than five grapes drinks like holiday perfection whether before, during or after dinner.

Yalumba 2010 'Y Series' Viognier ($14.95-$17.99)
▶ This Aussie viognier serves up fresh, tropical flavours supported by a vibrant, white pepper spice that's ideal with any major meal.

Oyster Bay 2010 Chardonnay ($17.99-$19.99)
▶ It's hard to beat the depth of flavour chardonnay brings to the table and this New Zealander shows off the varietal's up-front fruit without going too crazy with the oak.

Louis Latour 2009 Pinot Noir ($18.95-$25.49)
▶ The grape's home region is France's Burgundy and this balanced, berry-forward Frenchman is a classic companion for red and white meats.

Frescobaldi 2007 Nipozzano Chianti Riserva ($19.92-$27)
▶ With its full-bodied richness and long in the mouth fruit flavour this Tuscan red really talks turkey.

Bodegas Montecillo 2008 Crianza ($14.95-$19.99)
▶ Red Rioja from Spain may sound like an unconventional turkey partner, but this wine's lightly wooded, cherry, cedar expression is the bomb.

Croft Pink Port ($19.95-$19.99)
▶ Serving port chilled is a necessity, serving it ice cold is the wave of the future and this fruit-fest of a fortified wine from Portugal tastes great over ice as a post-dinner sipper.

Père Anselme NV La Fiole du Pape Châteauneuf-du-Pape ($35.49-$39.50)
▶ More than just a cool crooked bottle; this tasty, well-balanced French red is a blend of up to 13 different grapes.

PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.

Hot stuff for the kitchen

Breville Mini Pie Maker, $89.99, available at Sears, sears.ca.

Breville Tea Maker, $299.99, available at breville.ca.

Cuisinart Blend and Cook Soup and Beverage Maker, $199.99, available at Canadian Tire, canadiantire.ca.

Nescafe Dolce Gusto Circolo, $149, available at dolce-gusto.ca.

Philips Saeco Xelsis Digital ID Automatic Espresso Machine, $3,099.99, available at Philips, philips.ca.

Keurig "Special Edition" Single Serve Brewer, $179.99, available at Canadian Tire, canadiantire.ca.

PC Home Mini Cupcake Maker, $19, available where President's Choice products are sold, presidentschoice.ca.

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Calgary
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403 374-0258

Edmonton
6143 28th avenue
780 461-4249

Edmonton
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780 469-5560

Edmonton
9774 170 Street
780 443-2345

Rockyview
CrossIron Mills
403 274-5464

Edmonton
9522 Ellerslie Road
780 466-7850

Edmonton
U#9 13508 Victoria Trail
780 457-2258

Edmonton
U#113 - 12222, 137 Ave
780 406-7001

Offer ends December 31, 2011. Available to residential customers in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Yukon, Nunavut, Northwest Territories, New Brunswick and Newfoundland, where access and line of sight permits. As of December 10, 2011, e-bill will be provided at no cost and paper bill will be available for $2/month. The paper bill fee will begin appearing on your next bill. Visit bell.ca/mybell to switch your monthly billing from paper bill to e-bill at no cost. Receivers may be new or refurbished at Bell's choice. Where applicable, monthly prices include a fee of 1.5% to fund Bell's contribution to the CRTC's Local Programming Improvement Fund (LPIF); see bell.ca/LPIF. LPIF will be itemized separately on your Bell invoice. Subject to change without notice; not combinable with other offers. Taxes, additional fees extra and restrictions apply; see bell.ca/bellbundle. **(1)** With a 2-yr. term, $0 installation fee for up to 4 receivers. Without a term, $100.49 installation fee for 1 receiver applies. Includes satellite installation, receiver setup and connection to your TV; see bell.ca/installationincluded. $50.75 installation fee for each additional receiver. **(2)** If you rent without default for 36 consecutive months, you may choose to take title to and own the receiver by notifying Bell TV within 30 days of making your 36th payment. If you choose not to take title to or to terminate rental of the receiver, you must return it to Bell TV within 30 days or pay the damages suffered by Bell. You may terminate your rental at any time without termination fees provided you return the receiver; however, early termination fees may apply to the programming portion of your account if you also terminate your programming. Receiver warranty up to 39 months.

Unparalleled Holiday Gifts from the BBC!
Captain
Driver
Doctor
Boss
Lizard
Earth

A GROWING VOICE

ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK

MORE CANADIANS ARE CHOOSING TO HELP OTHERS OVER THE HOLIDAYS

During the Christmas holidays, there tends to be a focus on gift giving, but there is a growing movement towards charitable gift giving.

"I think it's a sort of growing voice," says Owen Charters, the executive director of canadahelps.org.

Canadahelps.org is a Canadian website that allows people to make online donations to any registered Canadian charity.

Charters says part of the reason for the charitable gift giving movement is that in an aging population, people are having a hard time finding items of need for themselves and others.

"How many more things do we really need?" is a question Charters says many baby boomers are asking themselves.

Charters says companies are also gravitating towards charitable gift giving. Rather than sending out cards and gifts, some are instead sending out holiday cards by email and making a donation to charity.

For Heather Avery, a resident of Truro, N.S., her practice of charitable gift giving during the Christmas holidays originated from her husband's family. Avery's husband grew up on a farm and the values of being appreciative of what you had and helping others in need were instilled in the children from an early age.

Charitable gift giving is an idea she has bought into completely.

"When I came on the scene, it was like, 'Oh, you don't give your mom and dad a gift for Christmas,'" recalls Avery. "Now it's second nature. It's just, 'This is what we do. What charity are we choosing this year?' It's the way it should be."

BRAND X PICTURES/THINKSTOCK

Another added benefit of making a donation to charity is the tax benefits, although research shows this is only a small motivating factor for people.

With around 80,000 charities in Canada, choosing one (or a few) to donate to can be a challenge. Charters recommends checking out charities' annual reports and their websites to get a better idea of the work they are doing and the sort of impact they are having. Also, don't hesitate to contact the organization for additional information.

"An organization that's doing great work is usually proud to talk about what they are up to," says Charters.

One important thing to determine is whether an organization is actually a charity. To verify this, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) recommends people ask a charity for its registration number and then confirm its status by accessing CRA's charities listing on its website (cra-arc.gc.ca) or by phoning CRA.

CHILDREN'S WISH GRANTS WISHES IN RECORD NUMBERS

Last year, The Children's Wish Foundation of Canada granted wishes to more children with a life- threatening illness than in any other year in its history. Approximately 1,100 children and their families got a reprieve from difficult treatments, therapies and hospital stays, and shared in the positive experience, hope and courage that a wish can bring.

"2011 is shaping up to be another record year for granting wishes," commented Regan Ludlow, Acting Director of Wishes for Children's Wish. "Virtually every month this year has seen a record number of children approved to receive their most heartfelt wish."

"We are very privileged to be able to have such a positive impact on the lives of the children we serve and their families," notes Children's Wish CEO, Chris Kotsopoulos, "and we look forward to continuing our tradition of never refusing a wish to an eligible child."

The cost of granting wishes to all children approved this year is expected to exceed $11 million, placing greater importance on expanding the Foundation's engagement with volunteers and donors over the holiday season through such diverse avenues as The Catalogue of Wishes (catalogueofwishes.ca).

The Children's Wish Foundation of Canada is the country's only all-Canadian, national wish-granting organization with chapter offices in every province. The Foundation relies entirely on the generosity of their donors and volunteers to grant children their wishes. For more information about The Children's Wish Foundation of Canada, visit childrenswish.ca.

Paige was granted her wish to have her very own playhouse by Children's Wish

HOLIDAY GIVING GUIDE:
A NEW LOOK AT HOLIDAY MONEY MYTHS

PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE MONEY CAN'T BUY HAPPINESS MIGHT BE SURPRISED AT HOW MUCH JOY YOU CAN BUY

A gift from World Vision Canada's 2011 holiday catalogue comes with a guarantee to change lives, including your own. Consider these twists on some old chestnuts.

FACT OR FICTION?
HEALTH IS BETTER THAN WEALTH

Health is, of course, invaluable. That's what makes a gift of health-care essentials worth more than a fortune in a developing country. For just $100, you (or a group of co-workers or family members) can stock a medical clinic with vital supplies like antibiotics, mosquito nets and vaccines. No wonder it's one of World Vision's most popular gifts: Canadians stocked nearly 10,000 medical clinics last year alone.

FACT OR FICTION?
MONEY DOESN'T GROW ON TREES

Answer: not literally, of course. But the miraculous moringa tree might as well sprout cash. Often referred to as the "miracle tree," the moringa grows throughout Africa and Latin America; its leaves and stems are exceptionally nutritious, and they yield cleansers, medicines and fibres that families can sell. For $125, you can buy a family a future.

FACT OR FICTION?
IT TAKES MONEY TO MAKE MONEY

Absolutely true – and perhaps no truer than when a gift takes a family or even a community from dire poverty to sustainability. One of World Vision Canada's most popular gift is two hens and a rooster, which cost $50 and provide not only high-protein food for families but a source of income. You can also purchase goats, beekeeping kits, a fish farm… the list goes on.

FACT OR FICTION?
MONEY CAN'T BUY ME LOVE

No? By sponsoring a child in a developing country for just $35 a month, 415,000 Canadians have discovered friends, made a difference and found the joy of a gift that comes from the heart.

To shop visit worldvision.ca/gifts

THE PERFECT STOCKING STUFFER!

Want to buy a gift on behalf of a loved one?

Let them do their own shopping with a World of Change Giving Card, which they can use to purchase gifts from the World Vision Canada gift catalogue.

4 sports

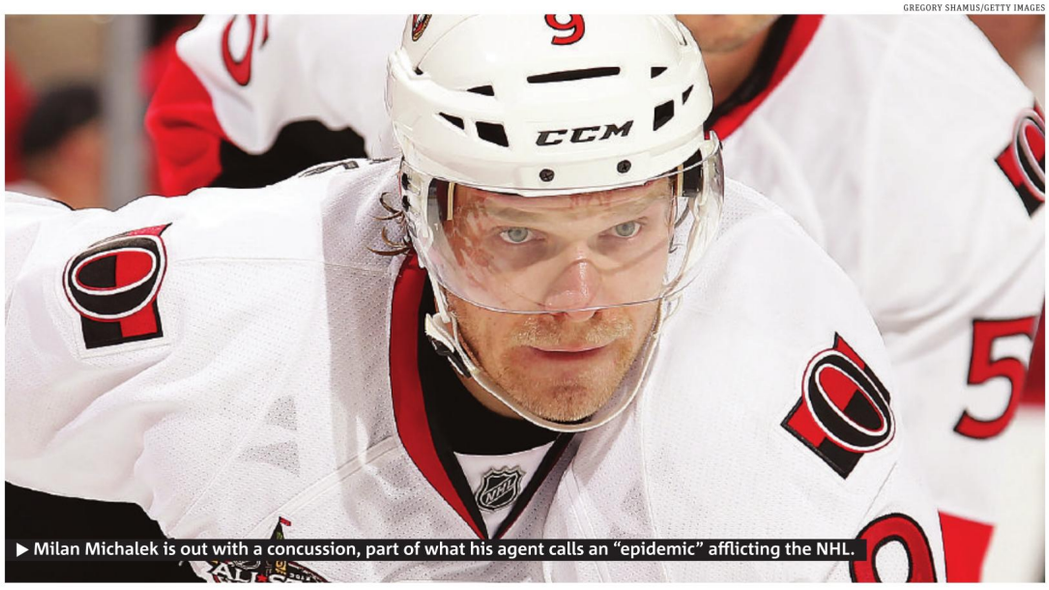
Quoted

"There's no need to talk about trades or what's on ESPN or in the newspaper. There's no need to bring it on the court."

MAGIC CENTRE DWIGHT HOWARD. HOWARD SAID THURSDAY THAT HIS TRADE REQUEST HASN'T BEEN WITHDRAWN, A DAY AFTER MAGIC GENERAL MANAGER OTIS SMITH SHOOK OFF QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT OFFERS HE'D RECEIVED, AND SAID THAT TRADE DISCUSSIONS INVOLVING HIM "COULD GO TO THE END OF THE SEASON."

Scan code for more sports news.

GREGORY SHAMUS/GETTY IMAGES



▶ Milan Michalek is out with a concussion, part of what his agent calls an "epidemic" afflicting the NHL.

Call for action on concussion issue

Hockey agent urges NHL, teams to do something about 'epidemic'

The rhetoric around concussions in the NHL is on the rise along with the number of high-profile players suffering from one.

Agent Allan Walsh of Octagon Sports, who represents concussed league goal-scoring leader Milan Michalek, believes the issue has become an "epidemic" and called on the league to do more to address it.

"Clearly, the NHL is in the throes of a concussion epidemic," Walsh said Thursday. "Only time will tell how severe the long-term health ramifications will be for concussed NHL players. With the economic incentive to make NHL hockey more exciting, the league worked diligently to increase the speed of the game. With increased speed necessarily comes increased collision.

"The results as it relates to player safety are self-evident."

Deputy commissioner Bill Daly scoffed at that suggestion.

"For people to suggest that the last seven to 10 days and the experience we've had and some of the names that are out should somehow materially alter our approach to this issue is ridiculous," he said.

The spotlight returned to hockey's hot-button issue on Monday when Sidney Crosby announced that he'd suffered a setback in his return to action and got even more intense with a string of similar diagnoses in the days that followed.

Michalek was injured Tuesday night after colliding with a teammate, joining the NHL's leading scorer (Claude Giroux) and its reigning rookie of the year (Jeff Skinner).

Other stars like Mike Richards, Kris Letang and Marc Staal are also on the sidelines. In all, players earning more than $50 million combined this season are currently out with head injuries.

However, the number of total concussions through the same period last season is actually down, according to Daly.

"We've probably had periods of time where we've had as many concussions, but they weren't ... as high-profile players," he said. "The last thing anybody wants to do is overreact to a very short snapshot in time." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Supporter

At least one NHL general manager agrees with Allan Walsh, telling The Canadian Press privately this week he believes measures need to be taken to slow the game down.

▶ That would likely involve reversing some of the once-celebrated changes that came out of the 2004-05 lockout — such as removing the trapezoid behind the goal or reinstating the red-line for two-line passes. It could also include expanding the rink size.

Pronger done for season

The Philadelphia Flyers say captain Chris Pronger will miss the rest of the season with "severe post-concussion syndrome."

The decision was made after the 37-year-old was examined in Pittsburgh by doctors John Maroon and Mickey Collins, who also treated Penguins star Sidney Crosby.

"Chris will continue to receive treatments and therapy with the hope that he can get better," Flyers general manager Paul Holmgren said in a release Thursday.

Pronger has missed the Flyers' last 11 games since coming down with what the team first described as a virus and later changed to post-concussion symptoms.

The bruising defenceman also took a stick in the eye from Toronto's Mikhail Grabovski in late October that resulted in facial trauma and caused him to miss six games.

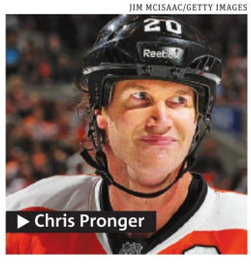
Pronger has one goal and 11 assists in 13 games this season.

The Dryden, Ont., native, who won gold medals with Canada at the 2002 and 2010 Olympics, signed a seven-year contract with the Flyers in 2009.

He also won the Stanley Cup with the Anaheim Ducks in 2007.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

JIM MCISAAC/GETTY IMAGES



▶ Chris Pronger

Clippers believe fortunes will change with Paul

Chris Paul endured two weeks of sleepless nights, stressful days and at least one imploded trade before he finally found a new home with the Los Angeles Clippers.

That's just one reason the West Coast looks so good to the superstar point guard, who's eager to start turning his new franchise into the greatest show in L.A.

The Clippers formally introduced their new acquisition on Thursday night. The longtime New Orleans guard tried on his new No. 3 jersey and met with Blake Griffin and the rest of his revitalized teammates, who can't wait to catch the four-time All-Star's passes.

"This is not my day, by the way. This is the Clippers' day," Paul told an overflowing media crowd.

A day earlier, the Clippers acquired Paul in a four-player trade with the Hornets, outmanoeuvring the Lakers and several other suitors for the player widely considered the NBA's best point guard.

Paul realizes his move is a bold endorsement of the long-struggling Clippers, who have been overshadowed by the 16-time champion Lakers for three decades.

Griffin is looking forward to lining up with Paul and fellow newcomers Caron Butler and Chauncey Billups, called "my big brother" by Paul.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	OTL	SL	GF	GA	Pts	Home	Away	Last 10	Strk
d-Philadelphia	30	20	7	2	1	110	85	43	8-4-1-1	12-3-1-0	9-1-0-0	W7
d-Boston	30	20	9	0	1	102	61	41	11-6-0-1	9-3-0-0	7-2-0-1	W3
d-Florida	31	16	9	2	4	84	80	38	6-2-1-4	10-7-1-0	4-3-2-1	L3
NY Rangers	27	17	6	1	3	83	60	38	8-2-0-2	9-4-1-1	7-2-0-1	W2
Pittsburgh	31	17	10	2	2	95	79	38	8-3-2-0	9-7-0-2	5-4-1-0	L1
Toronto	30	16	11	2	1	93	95	35	7-4-2-1	9-7-0-0	5-4-1-0	W1
New Jersey	30	16	13	0	1	79	86	33	6-5-0-1	10-8-0-0	5-5-0-0	W2
Buffalo	30	15	12	2	1	81	82	33	7-9-2-1	8-3-0-0	3-4-2-1	L2
Montreal	32	13	12	2	5	82	84	33	5-6-2-4	8-6-0-1	3-3-1-3	L1
Winnipeg	30	14	12	3	1	84	93	32	10-4-0-0	4-8-3-1	6-3-1-0	W1
Ottawa	32	14	14	2	2	96	112	32	7-7-0-1	7-7-2-1	4-4-1-1	L1
Washington	29	15	13	0	1	89	94	31	10-5-0-1	5-8-0-0	4-6-0-0	L1
Tampa Bay	31	13	16	0	2	84	105	28	8-5-0-0	5-11-0-2	3-7-0-0	W1
Carolina	33	10	18	3	2	84	113	25	6-9-0-2	4-9-3-0	2-7-1-0	W1
NY Islanders	29	9	14	4	2	67	96	24	6-8-3-0	3-6-1-2	4-4-2-1	L4

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	OTL	SL	GF	GA	Pts	Home	Away	Last 10	Strk
d-Minnesota	32	20	8	2	2	83	70	44	10-4-1-1	10-4-1-1	7-2-0-1	L2
d-Chicago	31	19	8	1	3	103	95	42	9-2-0-3	10-6-1-0	7-2-0-1	W3
d-Dallas	30	18	11	0	1	77	80	37	9-4-0-1	9-7-0-0	6-3-0-1	W3
Detroit	30	19	10	1	0	96	67	39	12-2-1-0	7-8-0-0	7-3-0-0	L1
Vancouver	31	18	11	0	2	101	77	38	8-4-0-1	10-7-0-1	7-2-0-1	L2
St. Louis	29	17	9	0	3	71	62	37	11-3-0-1	6-6-0-2	7-2-0-1	W3
Nashville	31	16	11	3	1	83	83	36	7-5-2-1	9-6-1-0	6-4-0-0	W4
San Jose	28	15	10	2	1	78	68	33	8-6-1-0	7-4-1-1	3-5-1-1	L3
Phoenix	30	15	12	1	2	78	80	33	6-6-1-1	9-6-0-1	4-6-0-0	L3
Los Angeles	31	14	13	2	2	67	71	32	8-9-0-1	6-4-2-1	3-6-1-0	W1
Edmonton	30	14	13	0	3	83	80	31	9-5-0-2	5-8-0-1	4-5-0-1	L1
Calgary	31	14	14	2	1	78	87	31	8-5-1-1	6-9-1-0	6-2-1-1	L2
Colorado	31	14	16	1	0	82	94	29	8-9-0-0	6-7-1-0	5-5-0-0	W1
Anaheim	30	9	16	2	3	71	96	23	7-9-1-0	2-7-1-3	3-6-1-0	W1
Columbus	31	9	18	1	3	74	102	22	6-9-1-1	3-9-0-2	4-5-1-0	L1

d — division leaders ranked 1-2-3 regardless of points; a team winning in overtime or shootout is credited with two points and a victory in the W column; the team losing in overtime or shootout receives one point which is registered in the OTL (overtime loss) or SL (shootout loss) column.

Last night's results
Carolina 4 Vancouver 3
Tampa Bay 5 Calgary 4 (OT)
Nashville 4 Detroit 3
Dallas 3 N.Y. Islanders 2
Los Angeles 2 Columbus 1
Philadelphia 4 Montreal 3
N.Y. Rangers at St. Louis
Washington at Winnipeg
Edmonton at Phoenix
Colorado at San Jose
Wednesday's results
Boston 5 Ottawa 2
Anaheim 4 Phoenix 1
Chicago 4 Minnesota 3 (SO)
Tonight's games
All times Eastern
Dallas at New Jersey, 7 p.m.
Toronto at Buffalo, 7:30 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Ottawa, 7:30 p.m.
Calgary at Florida, 7:30 p.m.
Anaheim at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.
Tomorrow's games
Boston at Philadelphia, 1 p.m.
Vancouver at Toronto, 7 p.m.
New Jersey at Montreal, 7 p.m.
Buffalo at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m.
Anaheim at Winnipeg, 7 p.m.
Los Angeles at Detroit, 7 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Columbus, 7 p.m.
St. Louis at Nashville, 8 p.m.
N.Y. Islanders at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Phoenix, 8 p.m.
Washington at Colorado, 9 p.m.
Edmonton at San Jose, 10 p.m.
Sunday's games
Carolina at Florida, 5 p.m.
Calgary at Chicago, 7 p.m.
Columbus at St. Louis, 7 p.m.

HURRICANES 4, CANUCKS 3

First Period
1. Vancouver, Bieksa 3 (Higgins, Kesler) 5:19
Penalties — Malhotra Vcr, Ballard Vcr, Ruutu Car (roughing), Rome Vcr, Allen Car (fighting) 7:33, Raymond Vcr (interference) 10:27, Lapierre Vcr (goaltender interference) 15:10.
Second Period
2. Vancouver, Raymond 2 (H.Sedin, Burrows) 9:51
3. Carolina, Bowman 1 (Stewart, McBain) 15:52
4. Carolina, Ruutu 10 (Allen, Jokinen) 19:08
Penalties — Burrows Vcr (slashing) 3:28, Brent Car (holding) 5:11.
Third Period
5. Carolina, Bowman 2 (LaRose, Bra.Sutter) 0:37
6. Carolina, Spacek 1 (Ruutu, Brent) 6:12 (pp)
7. Vancouver, Burrows 10 (H.Sedin, Raymond) 8:40
Penalties — Ballard Vcr (holding) 5:12, Burrows Vcr (slashing) 6:12, Burrows Vcr, LaRose Car (roughing) 12:20.
Shots on goal

Vancouver	9	13	14	—36
Carolina	15	9	17	—41

Goal — Vancouver: C.Schneider (L,7-5-0); Carolina: Ward (W,10-13-4).
Power plays (goals-chances) — Vancouver: 0-1; Carolina: 1-6.
Referees — Dave Jackson, Rob Martell. **Linesmen** — Brad Kovachik, Mike Cvik.
Attendance — 15,292 (18,680) at Raleigh, N.C.

LIGHTNING 5, FLAMES 4 (OT)

First Period
1. Tampa Bay, Purcell 6 (Downie, Moore) 5:11 (pp)
2. Calgary, Stajan 1 (Jackman, Kostopoulos) 19:27
Penalties — Jokinen Cal (hooking) 3:30, Bouwmeester Cal (hooking), Purcell TB (goaltender interference) 13:17, Gilroy TB (cross-checking) 16:46, Moore TB (hooking) 19:55.
Second Period
3. Calgary, Iginla 12 (Jokinen, Bouwmeester) 1:57
4. Tampa Bay, Pyatt 3 (Shannon, Jones) 10:10
5. Tampa Bay, Malone 7 (Stamkos, Hedman) 12:05
6. Tampa Bay, Thompson 3 (Tyrell, Hedman) 19:26
Penalties — None.
Third Period
7. Calgary, Bourque 10 (D.Smith) 0:58
8. Calgary, Jokinen 9 (Tanguay, D.Smith) 16:48 (pp)
Penalty — Hedman TB (slashing) 15:06.
Overtime
9. Tampa Bay, Stamkos 19 (Brewer, Downie) 0:30
Penalties — None.
Shots on goal

Calgary	9	5	13	0	—27
Tampa Bay	10	18	5	1	—34

Goal — Calgary: Kiprusoff (L,14-10-2); Tampa Bay: Garon (W,7-8-1). **Power plays (goals-chances)** — Calgary: 1-3; Tampa Bay: 1-1.
Attendance — 17,241 (19,204) at Tampa, Fla.

FLYERS 4, CANADIENS 3

First Period
1. Philadelphia, Talbot 9 (Voracek, Timonen) 12:07
Penalties — Marshall Pha (slashing) 3:08, Nokelainen Mtl (holding) 9:08, Kaberle Mtl (interference) 12:39, Bourdon Pha (slashing) 17:01, Voracek Pha (tripping) 17:21, Coburn Pha (cross-checking) 18:50.
Second Period
2. Montreal, Desharnais 5 (Pacioretty, Kaberle) 5:02
3. Philadelphia, Zolnierczyk 2 (Carle) 5:48
4. Montreal, Leblanc 1 (Blunden, Subban) 13:24
5. Philadelphia, Simmonds 9 (Carle) 18:10
6. Montreal, Cole 12 (Pacioretty, Desharnais) 19:44 (pp)
Penalties — Leblanc Mtl (holding stick) 2:32, Couturier Pha (hooking) 7:21, Cammalleri Mtl (tripping) 16:06, Couturier Pha (slashing) 19:19, Carle Pha (delay of game) 19:55, Desharnais Mtl (tripping) 20:00.
Third Period
7. Philadelphia, Meszaros 3 (Jagr, Carle) 8:08
Penalties — Couturier Pha (slashing) 3:46, Plekanec Mtl (high-sticking) 14:50, Talbot Pha (holding) 17:29.
Shots on goal

Philadelphia	9	10	6	—25
Montreal	12	8	11	—31

Goal — Philadelphia: Bobrovsky (W,5-2-1); Montreal: Price (L,12-8-7). **Power plays (goals-chances)** — Phila.: 0-6; Montreal: 1-9.
Attendance — 21,273 (21,273) at Montreal.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	PT
Giroux, Pha	16	23	39
Kessel, Tor	18	18	36
Toews, Chi	18	16	34
Lupul, Tor	13	21	34
D.Sedin, Vcr	12	22	34
Stamkos, TB	18	15	33
Versteeg, Fla	15	18	33
H.Sedin, Vcr	8	25	33
Sharp, Chi	16	16	32
Ma.Hossa, Chi	13	19	32
Nugent-Hopkins, Edm	13	19	32
Pominville, Buf	10	22	32

Last night's games not included

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

EAST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New England	10	3	0	.769	396	274
N.Y. Jets	8	5	0	.615	327	270
Buffalo	5	8	0	.385	288	341
Miami	4	9	0	.308	256	246

SOUTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-Houston	10	3	0	.769	330	208
Tennessee	7	6	0	.538	266	251
Jacksonville	4	9	0	.308	193	252
Indianapolis	0	13	0	.000	184	382

NORTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Baltimore	10	3	0	.769	320	202
Pittsburgh	10	3	0	.769	282	198
Cincinnati	7	6	0	.538	285	270
Cleveland	4	9	0	.308	178	254

WEST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Denver	8	5	0	.615	269	302
Oakland	7	6	0	.538	290	354
San Diego	6	7	0	.462	324	299
Kansas City	5	8	0	.385	173	305

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

EAST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
N.Y. Giants	7	6	0	.538	324	349
Dallas	7	6	0	.538	317	281
Philadelphia	5	8	0	.385	297	292
Washington	4	9	0	.308	229	290

SOUTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
x-New Orleans	10	3	0	.769	415	286
Atlanta	8	5	0	.615	300	267
Carolina	4	9	0	.308	313	355
Tampa Bay	4	9	0	.308	232	370

NORTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-Green Bay	13	0	0	1.000	466	278
Detroit	8	5	0	.615	367	305
Chicago	7	6	0	.538	301	255
Minnesota	2	11	0	.154	274	364

WEST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-San Francisco	10	3	0	.769	307	182
Seattle	6	7	0	.462	246	259
Arizona	6	7	0	.462	253	288
St. Louis	2	11	0	.154	153	326

x-clinched playoff spot; **y**-clinched division
WEEK 15
Last night's result
Jacksonville at Atlanta
Tomorrow's game
All times Eastern
Dallas at Tampa Bay, 8:20 p.m.
Sunday's games
New Orleans at Minnesota, 1 p.m.
Seattle at Chicago, 1 p.m.
Cincinnati at St. Louis, 1 p.m.
Carolina at Houston, 1 p.m.
Green Bay at Kansas City, 1 p.m.
Tennessee at Indianapolis, 1 p.m.
Miami at Buffalo, 1 p.m.
Washington at N.Y. Giants, 1 p.m.
Detroit at Oakland, 4:05 p.m.
New England at Denver, 4:15 p.m.
Cleveland at Arizona, 4:15 p.m.
N.Y. Jets at Philadelphia, 4:15 p.m.
Baltimore at San Diego, 8:20 p.m.
Monday's game
Pittsburgh at San Francisco, 8:30 p.m.

GOLF

THAILAND CHAMPIONSHIP

At Bangkok
Par 72
First Round

Lee Westwood, England	29-31—60
John Daly, United States	34-31—65
Gregory Bourdy, France	34-34—68
Thaworn Wiratchant, Thailand	34-34—68
Charl Schwartzel, South Africa	36-33—69
Michael Thompson, United States	34-35—69
Jbe Kruger, South Africa	36-33—69
Chris Rodgers, England	33-36—69
Antonio Lascuna, Philippines	35-34—69
Kwanchai Tannin, Thailand	36-33—69
Adam Groom, Australia	34-35—69
Scott Hend, Australia	36-33—69
Kodai Ichihara, Japan	34-35—69
Simon Dyson, England	35-34—69
Lu Chien-soon, Taiwan	36-33—69
Thongchai Jaidee, Thailand	33-37—70
Tommy Fleetwood, England	35-35—70
Panuwat Muenlek, Thailand	36-34—70
Ryo Ishikawa, Japan	34-36—70
Gaganjeet Bhullar, India	32-38—70
Tim Stewart, Australia	35-35—70
Lam Zhiqun, Singapore	37-33—70
Lee Sung, South Korea	36-34—70
Baek Seuk-hyun, South Korea	36-34—70
Miles Tunnicliff, England	36-34—70
Wang Ter-chang, Taiwan	36-34—70

DUBAI LADIES MASTERS

At Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Par 72
Second Round

Alexis Thompson, United States	70-66—136
Margherita Rigon, Italy	70-68—138
Sophie Gustafson, Sweden	71-67—138
Julieta Granada, Paraguay	68-71—139
Becky Morgan, Wales	70-69—139
Louise Larsson, Sweden	71-69—140
Michelle Wie, United States	73-67—140
Pernilla Lindberg, Sweden	72-68—140
Lotta Wahlin, Sweden	66-74—140
Elisabeth Esterl, Germany	70-71—141
Linda Wessberg, Sweden	68-73—141
Stacy Lee Bregman, South Africa	68-73—141
Minea Blomqvist, Finland	68-73—141
Beth Allen, United States	69-72—141
Lee-Anne Pace, South Africa	69-72—141
Christel Boeljon, Netherlands	69-72—141
Sara Brown, United States	71-71—142
Diana Luna, Italy	69-73—142

SOCCER

EUROPA LEAGUE

Yesterday's results
(Home teams listed first)
Group A
PAOK Thessaloniki (Gre.) 1 Rubin Kazan (Rus.) 1
Shamrock Rovers (Ire.) 0 Tottenham (Eng.) 4
Group B
Hannover (Germ.) 3 Vorskla Poltava (Ukr.) 1
FC Copenhagen (Den.) 0 Standard Liege (Belg.) 1
Group C
Hapoel Tel Aviv (Isr.) 2 Legia Warsaw (Pol.) 0
PSV Eindhovn (Neth.) 2 Rapid Buchrst (Rom.) 1
Group G
AZ Alkmaar (Neth.) 1 Metalist Kharkiv (Ukr.) 1
Austria Vienna (Austria) 2 Malmo (Swe.) 0
Group H
FC Brugges (Belgium) 1 Braga (Portugal) 1
Birmingham City (Eng.) 1 Maribor (Sloven.) 0
Group I
Udinese (Italy) 1 Celtic (Scotland) 1
Atletico Madrid (Spain) 3 Rennes (France) 1

TRANSACTIONS

BASEBALL

AMERICAN LEAGUE
CLEVELAND INDIANS—Named Derek Falvey director of baseball operations (player personnel & acquisitions) & David Stearns director of baseball operations (contracts, strategy & analysis).
MINNESOTA TWINS—Agreed to terms with OF Josh Willingham on a three-year contract.
TEXAS RANGERS—Agreed to terms with RHP Fabio Castillo & C Chris Robinson on minor league contracts.

NATIONAL LEAGUE
HOUSTON ASTROS—Released OF-1B Nick Stavinoa from his minor league contract.
NEW YORK METS—Agreed to terms with LHP Chuck James on a minor league contract.
PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES—Agreed to terms with LHP Dontrelle Willis on a 1-year contract.
ST. LOUIS CARDINALS—Agreed to terms with LHP J.C. Romero on a one-year contract.

BASKETBALL

NBA
CHARLOTTE BOBCATS—Signed G Reggie Williams to a two-year contract.
DALLAS MAVERICKS—Waived G Andy Rautins.
DENVER NUGGETS—Signed F Michael Ruffin.
GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS—Signed F Dominic McGuire.
MIAMI HEAT—Signed F Billy White.
MILWAUKEE BUCKS—Signed F Jon Leuer.
MINNESOTA TIMBERWOLVES—Signed G Malcolm Lee to a 3-yr contract & G Bonzi Wells.
NEW JERSEY NETS—Signed F Ime Udoka.

FOOTBALL

NFL
WASHINGTON REDSKINS—Placed S LaRon Landry on injured reserve.

HOCKEY

NHL
LEAGUE OFFICE—Fined Boston D Adam McQuaid $2,500 for kneeing Ottawa F Nick Foligno in a Dec. 4 game.
BUFFALO SABRES—Signed F Kevin Sundher to a three-year contract.
DETROIT RED WINGS—Recalled LW Tomas Tatar from Grand Rapids (AHL).
NEW JERSEY DEVILS—Sent RW Nick Palmieri to Albany (AHL).
NEW YORK ISLANDERS—Recalled D Calvin de Haan & G Kevin Poulin from Bridgeport (AHL). Placed G Rick DiPietro on injured reserve.
PHOENIX COYOTES—Recalled D Chris Summers from Portland (AHL).

AHL
BRIDGEPORT SOUND TIGERS—Signed G Nick Niedert and D Wes Cunningham.
CONNECTICUT WHALE—Recalled F Jeff Prough from Greenville (ECHL).
PROVIDENCE BRUINS—Signed F Everett Sheen.
SAN ANTONIO RAMPAGE—Recalled F Angelo Esposito from Cincinnati (ECHL). Reassigned F David Marshall to Rio Grande Valley (CHL).

SOCCER

MLS
COLUMBUS CREW—Signed G Matt Lampson to a multiyear contract.
PORTLAND TIMBERS—Signed F Jose Adolfo Valencia.

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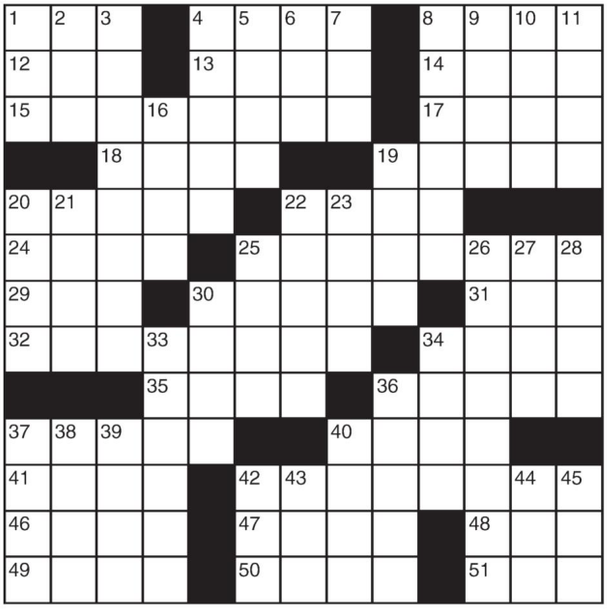
Crossword



Across
1 Humongous
4 Unfriendly
8 Took to the skies
12 Commotion
13 Eye layer
14 Emanation
15 1849 California event
17 Commotion
18 Campus digs
19 Trusty mount
20 "Yippee!"
22 Create
24 Equal
25 Shirk work
29 Mess up
30 Analogy mark
31 Have debts
32 Paris airport eponym
34 Winter transport
35 Guitars' smaller kin
36 Director Almodóvar
37 Put into words
40 Complaint
41 Stead
42 Source of wealth
46 Teensy bit
47 Vicinity
48 Junior
49 Former European capital
50 Sailing vessel
51 Day divs.

Down
1 Satchel
2 Bachelor's final utterance
3 Cohort of Behar and Hasselbeck
4 Pungent dish in Indian cuisine
5 Egg
6 "— Miserables"
7 Doo follower
8 Zip up, maybe
9 Troubadour's instrument
10 Great Lake
11 Actress Sela
16 Entryway
19 Epidermis
20 Newspaper page
21 Present
22 Shopping centers
23 Lotion additive
25 Beauty spot
26 Pepperidge Farms favorites
27 Basin accessory
28 Start over
30 Potential pickle, for short
33 Fall
34 Appear
36 Go by bicycle
37 Thick slice
38 One of The Jackson 5
39 A billion years (Var.)
40 Huffed and puffed
42 Festive
43 Man-mouse link
44 Neither mate
45 Type measures

▶ Yesterday's answer

S	T	O	P		A	N	D		F	L	A	B
P	E	R	U		L	E	I		R	A	G	E
E	A	S	T		P	E	P		O	V	E	N
C	R	O	U	C	H		L	A	Z	E		
			P	I	A	N	O	B	E	N	C	H
C	O	C	O	A		E	M	U		D	U	E
L	O	O	N		E	V	A		H	E	R	R
U	Z	I		A	X	E		A	O	R	T	A
B	E	N	C	H	P	R	E	S	S			
		C	O	A	L		S	P	A	R	S	E
A	R	I	A		O	P	S		N	O	O	N
L	I	D	S		I	R	A		N	A	R	D
P	O	E	T		T	O	Y		A	R	T	S

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

Sudoku

		6		1			9	
						7		
1	4	2	8	7				5
2		5	3			1		
				5				
		3			6	2		8
3				8	1	6	2	7
		8						
	5			3		4		

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's answer ▶

3	2	5	9	6	4	7	8	1
8	1	9	2	7	3	4	6	5
4	7	6	8	5	1	9	2	3
7	9	3	6	1	8	5	4	2
2	8	4	3	9	5	1	7	6
6	5	1	4	2	7	8	3	9
1	6	2	7	8	9	3	5	4
5	4	7	1	3	6	2	9	8
9	3	8	5	4	2	6	1	7

Send a KISS

You can now post your kiss, and read even more kisses, online at metronews.ca/kiss.

Vivu. I can't imagine my very existence w/o u. U r in my soul u r in my blood. May santa shower unstopabble happiness this X-mas on you my love .Miss u soooooooooo muchhh... **MUKNVIVIAN**

Noah, I love you so much, every single moment with you is absolutely perfet. This summer is going to be a dream come true and I can't wait to wake up next to you every day. We can do this... Even if our fridge doesn't make its own ice. I will always be yours, forever and always. **ALLIE**

The man I need to let go, Well, I finally get the message that it is over, after 6 months of no contact at all. I tried with no success, so I want to wish you a Merry Christmas and the very best of 2012. **STILL HURTING A LOT**

A look at the weather

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Min -8°	Min -2°	Min -6°
Max 0°	Max 5°	Max 2°

Michele McDougall
Weather Specialist
"My favourite part is reporting the weather. It fascinates me, and as we know around here, it's always changing, keeping forecasters on their toes". **WEEKDAYS 5:30 AM**

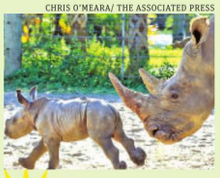
Today's horoscope

♈ Aries March 21-April 20 It's a good day for working your way through a pile of work, but it is not a good day for taking risks.
♉ Taurus April 21-May 21 Someone will come to you for advice today. Make sure he or she knows you can only help so much.
♊ Gemini May 22-June 21 Someone you trust will let you down today but it could turn out to be a blessing in disguise.
♋ Cancer June 22-July 22 A great weight is about to be lifted from your shoulders and once it has, you'll feel lighter than air.
♌ Leo July 23-Aug.23 Career issues and money matters could be a bit tense over the next 24 hours.
♍ Virgo Aug. 24- Sept. 22 All experience is good experience and a bad experience will teach you some important life lessons.
♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23 If you throw yourself at the first challenge that comes along today, you'll be short of energy for a bigger challenge that is coming up.
♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22 You have talent to reach the top, but whether you have motivation will become clear in the next few days.
♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21 The Sun remains in your sign until the 22nd. Between now and then, you must go all out to better yourself in every possible way.
♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20 If you believe you have been hard done by, suffer in silence, for now.
♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18 Loved ones and work colleagues will make demands today. Don't do so much that you exhaust yourself.
♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20. Like it or not, today you'll have to deal with someone for whom you have a distaste. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Caption contest

KERSTIN JOENSSON, FILE/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHRIS O'MEARA/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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You write it!

Write a funny caption for the image above and send it to play@metronews.ca — the winning caption will be published in tomorrow's Metro.

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Gigatech Systems Inc:
10566 - 108 St
Glenora Food Mart:
14035 - 105 Ave

Hair Unlimited:
#5, 10015 - 82 Ave
Sata Computer:
#10, 8103 - 127 Ave
The Renovation Store:
12049 - 127 St
Variety Dollar:
3427 - 118 Ave
Your Mobile:
11729 Jasper Ave